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The Northwest

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Jan. - Feb. 1956

A B.C. Magazine for B.C. Readers

Dawson Creek And The South Peace River Area.

Dawson Creek

Early Days in the Peace River

Peace River Pioneer

Agriculture in the Peace River

Concluding
Peter Dunlevey

Around the Towns

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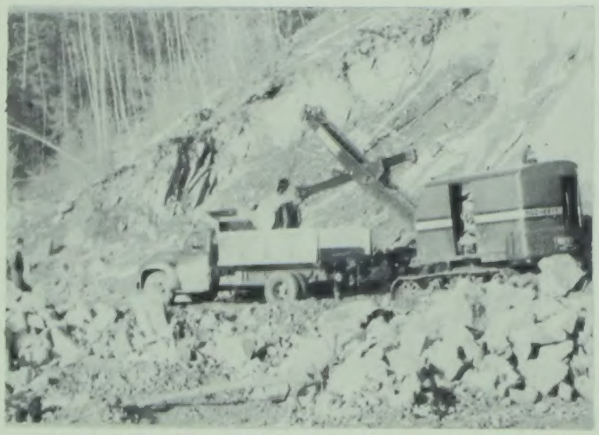

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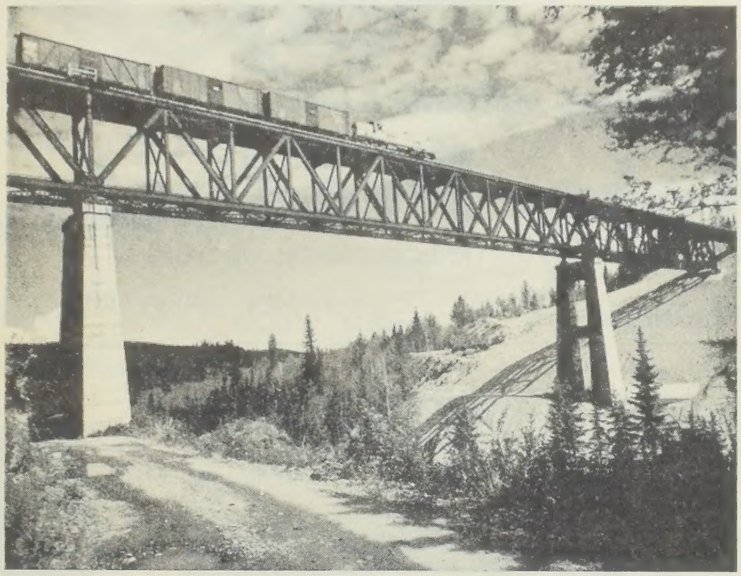

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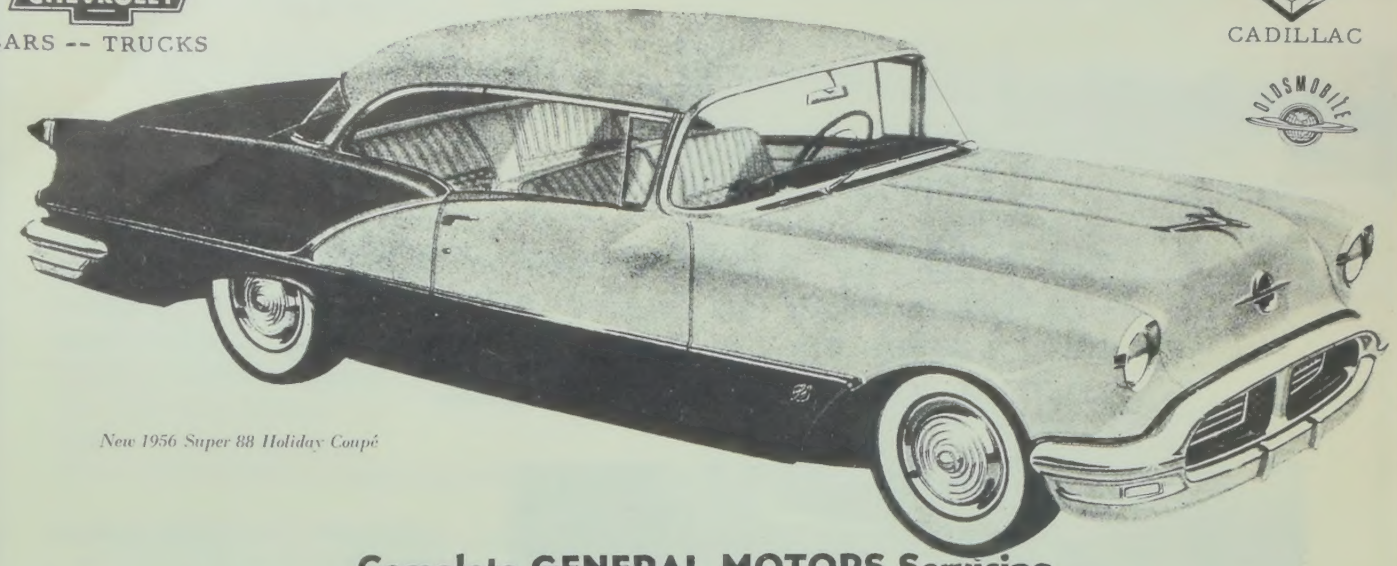

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next issue

COWBOY AUTHOR RICH HOBSON TELLS OF HIS STRUGGLE TO WRITE HIS LATEST BOOK "NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR A COWBOY"

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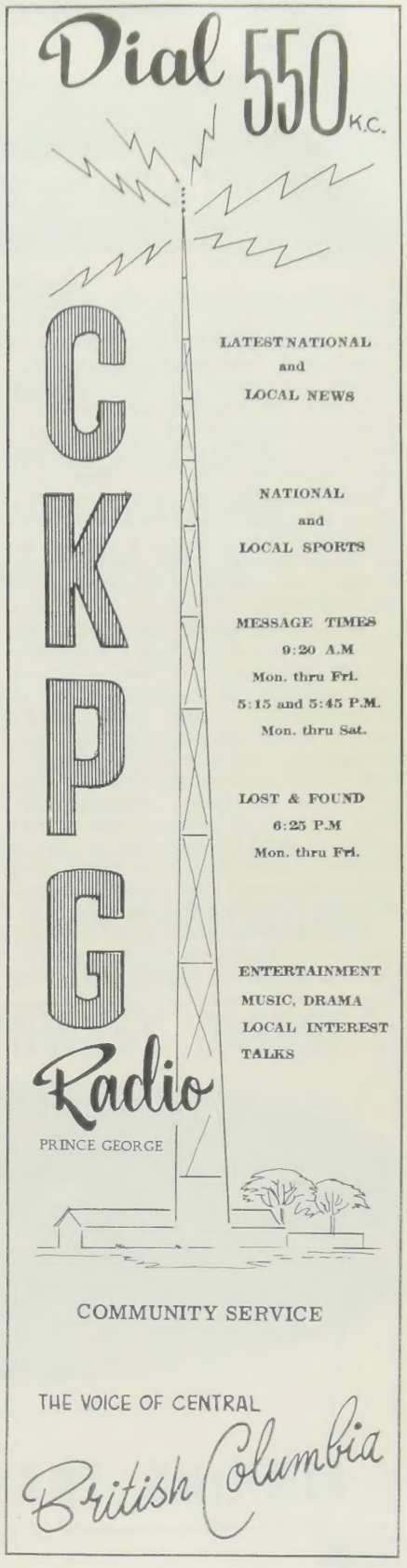

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Forest Service,
Hazelton, B. C.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

Just finished reading the Nov-Dec issue of the digest, and could not be at peace with myself unless I took this opportunity to extend my very sincerest of congratulations to you and your staff for the work you are doing. Notonly is it a "Hometown magazine" for all of us in the North, but also an inspiration to others to come up to "God's Country", not just as tourists, but like myself, permanent residents. For this I can vouch, for it was a copy of "Northwest Digest", that one day, a few years back, persuaded me to leave my home in Quebec (much though I love the east) and "Go West young man". It is a move that I will never regret, for since my arrival I have seen many of the wonderful sights to be seen in B. C., many indeed, that I have dreamed of seeing while meditating over other copies of your Digest. Have also met some of the people of the province, including Mr. Cliff Kopas, to whom I am always ready to bend an ear, for he has a wealth of information to share with anyone sincerely interested in understanding B. C. and its' people.

But congratulations are due, not only for the inspiring subject matter, and the wonderful people you tell us about, but also for the very friendly way, at times intimate way, your Digest is edited. Makes even a newcomer like myself feel at home. Your editorials, and stories, are refreshingly human and, when the occassion demands, humorous. My only regret is that I am such a "Johnny-come-lately", for to quote a certain editor, "-We think it is the world's best place to live, or we wouldn't be here".

Jim Hobart.

** Thanks, Jim, and welcome to B. C.

964 6th Avenue,
Prince Rupert,
B. C.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

Did you ever consider putting up a sign-board in Quesnel with a notice on it something like the following: "Do Not Leave The Cariboo Without A Lasting Souvenir--A Subscription To The Northwest Digest" etc.

One year in September I noticed many hunters passing that way. It may prove an inexpensive way to get some subscriptions. However it is just a suggestion.

Yours sincerely,
Rita M. Rogerson.

** And a darn good suggestion

C B C
Vancouver, B. C.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

How can you put cut-out renewal coupons on a page backed by an Eric Nichol story! Readers who cherish the Digest would never ever put scissors to a page of it... not ever!

Greetings to Alex, if you see him. He taught me how to appreciate this province. And good luck to Northwest Digest. It's better than ever.

Sincerely,
Eileen Laurie.

** Pardon us, Eileen, in our eager greediness to increase our circulation so we can attract more advertisers and in turn be able to buy more of Eric Nicols humor we completely overlooked the fact that our renewals backed on his story.

Thanks for the good wishes. And frankly Eileen, we are darn glad you have a radio program and not a magazine. You would be tough competition. Your "Morning Visit" rates tops with Interior householders, and you have given the Northwest area tremendous publicity.

GOOD USE FOR QUESNEL PARKING METERS

Engen, B. C.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

When we were visiting Quesnel last July we noticed your office and as I was about to go over a car minus

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

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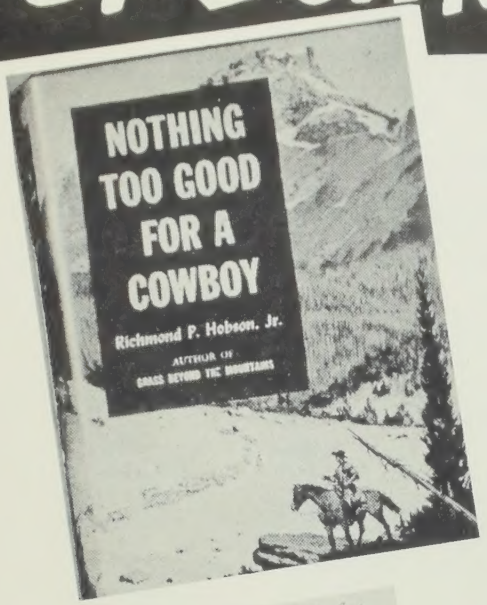

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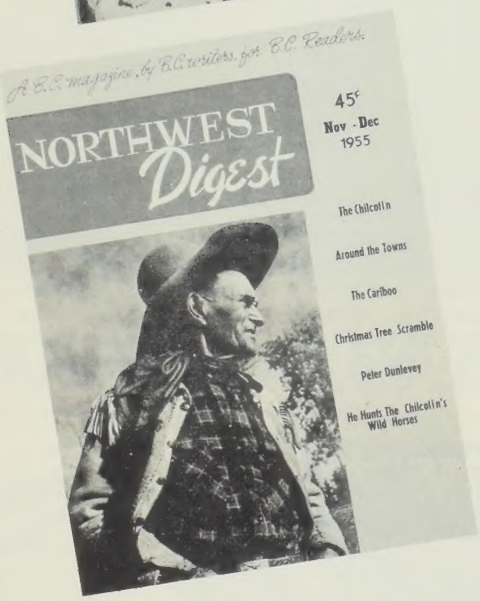

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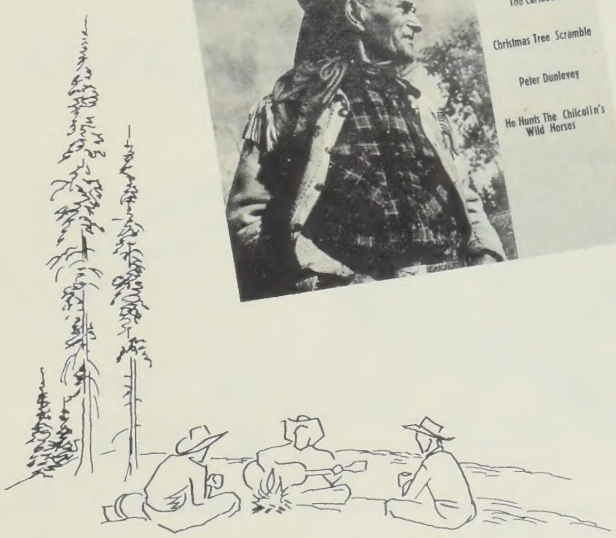

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Editorial

Dear Ottawa:

According to reports one of every two tax dollars is spent on defense. Now that is a lot of loot, and Ottawa, here in the Northwest we aren't getting our share.

You spent what was it, $10,000,000 proving that flying saucers weren't practical, or was it to prove they were practical? In any event that is immaterial. What is material is that spending one dollar so foolishly, let alone ten million, wasn't practical. Ottawa, that money could have been spent on far more practical defense measures.

In the first place every year the United States siphons off many of our most brilliant University graduates. Now who in this technical age is more important than an engineer, a chemist, and other trained personnel? So forget flying saucers. Get your head out of the clouds. Use a little of that money to sell Canada to Canadians. That will benefit the country far more than flying saucers.

Recently, Ottawa, the B. C. government asked for assistance to take the P. G. E. to the Peace River and beyond. Your offer was a pittence. May we offer a suggestion? Why not take some of this defense money and help with our railroad. It will pay off. Don't you think the north is vital? An attack isn't coming from Mexico, it'll come across the north. Isn't it important to have communication lines into the north? The Americans thought so when they built the Alaska Highway. Recently Defense Officials stated that Canada's air bases would have to be moved farther north, even above the Arctic Circle. Now just how are you going to get men and materials into the area? By parachute?

About $60,000,000 would put the railway over 300 miles closer to Alaska. Look at it this way. If you paid half the cost it would be only one defense dollar in every sixty for one year. Think of it. One dollar in every sixty. On the installment plan over three years one dollar in every one hundred and eighty. You would never miss it. And railways lead to developement. You would get your money back. How much did you get back from your flying saucer?

The Americans have 800 miles of paved highways in Alaska. How much of the Alaska Highway have you paved? None. The Whitehorse Board of Trade estimated that the entire highway could be paved for $85,000,000. Isn't this a vital part of defense? And once again it is an investment in the country, something, Ottawa, you seem reluctant to do. You are concerned over the North's lack of development. How can it develop without railways and highways?

Ottawa, you are spending $150,000,000 on 10 destroyer escorts. Why not build 5, and pave the Alaska Highway with the saving? Sure, an Admiral or two would be out of a job but think how the country would develop. And a paved highway can't run aground, collide and sink, or be wrecked in a dozen other ways as can your fancy destroyers that are probably outmoded by Russian Atomic subs.

The automobile age has been here for fifty years yet there isn't a highway across Canada. You are currently browbeating the Provinces into speeding up construction. Now, Ottawa, isn't it strategically important to have a highway across Canada? To say nothing of giving us prestige. Couldn't defense money be used to complete the Trans-Canada Highway?

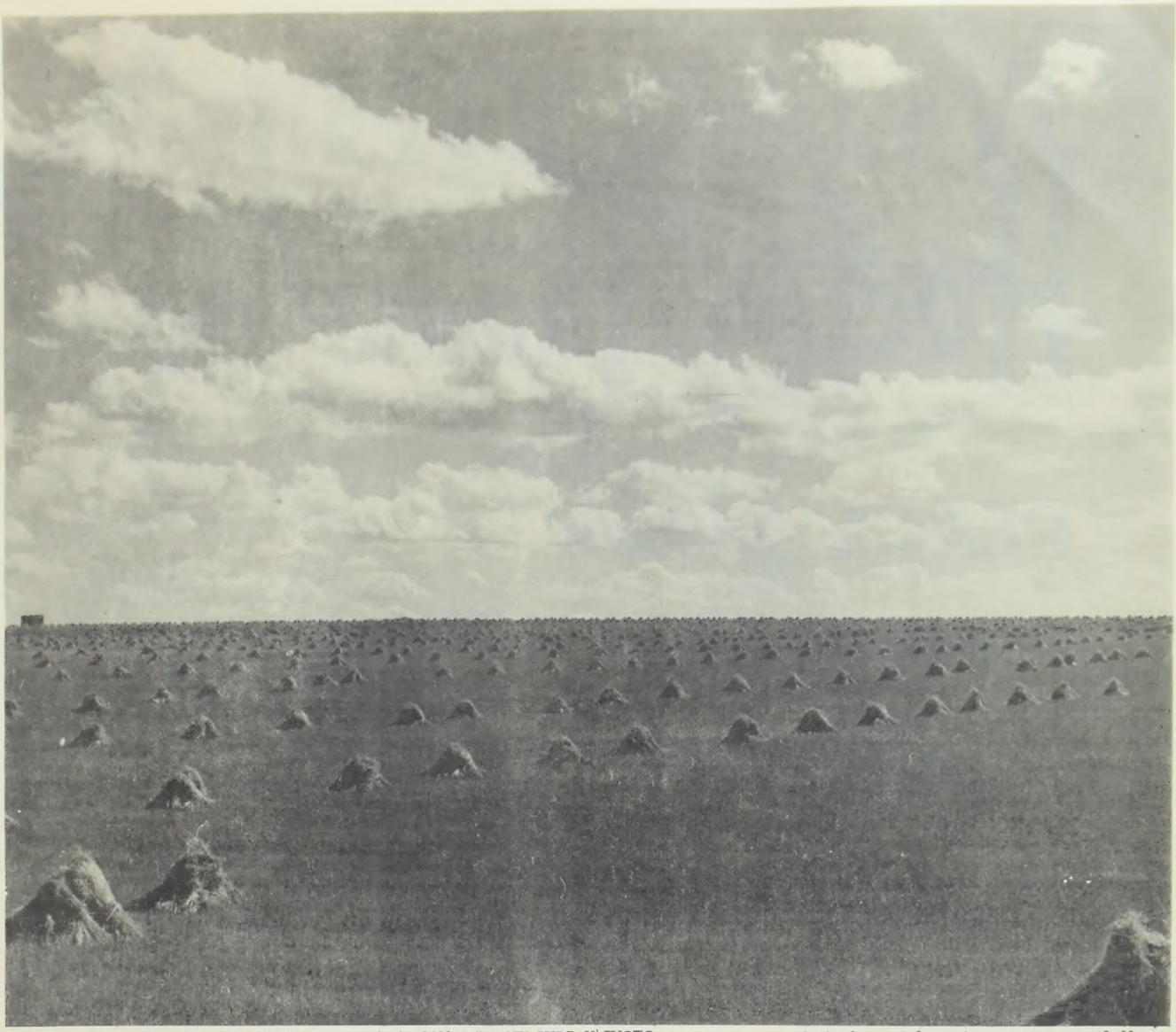
Last summer you could afford to take conventions and similar gatherings on destroyer cruises, yet you couldn't afford to keep the Prince Rupert Drydock operating. Prince Rupert businessmen went to Ottawa at their own expense to present their case. You turned them down cold. Too expensive. A piddling $100,000 a year. You spent the same year over three and a half million dollars converting one destroyer. Think of it. Over thirty five times as much. And where is this destroyer without a drydock?

You couldn't give the Canadian Merchant Marine a subsidy of $5,000,000 to keep thirty ships at sea and give employment to over 1,000 seamen. Yet you spend $15,000,000 for one Navy ship and toss in another $10,000,000 for flying saucers. Dear, dear, Ottawa, what good is a dashing Navy without the Merchant Service? Who carries those shells, fuels, and supplies? Not the $15,000,000 destroyers. The little old Merchant ships, the ones you ignore in peace time.

Last summer, Ottawa, a storm isolated Quesnel for a week. Did you offer help? No. Now wasn't that a wonderful chance to exercise your Engineer battalions? Almost every main bridge was gone. Wasn't it a great opportunity to give your Engineers some practical field exercises. Communications would have been restored quicker, the Engineers would have had experience, everyone would have benefited. And we somehow feel that the results would have been far better for public relations than cruising businessmen around the bay in a destroyer.

No, Ottawa, we aren't getting our share of this defense buck. You ignore us, but if a war comes you will promptly use our railway, our paved highways, and everything else. With northern hospitality we won't object. After all, you are on our side, then, if not now.

Maybe, Ottawa, you could look into the defense picture. Maybe spend a little more defense money in developing the north. It is a sound investment in the nation's future. You'll be repaid. Have you no faith in the north? We who live here have.



PEACE RIVER GRAIN FIELD B.C. GOVT. TRAVEL BUREAU PHOTO

AGRICULTURE IN THE PEACE

by HARRY GILES

There is no district in Canada and certainly not in British Columbia that offers greater opportunities to the progressive farmer than the Peace River District. Although Dawson Creek, is the highest initial grain shipping point in Canada, in the district there is more uncultivated land than cultivated. In fact the largest agricultural acreage in any one district in B. C. lies in the Peace River District.

According to F. H. Kitto, F. R. G. S. 145,000 square miles or 92,800,000 acres of land is included in the Peace River Country of B. C. and Alberta with a conservative estimate of 15,000,000 acres suitable for grain growing. When transportation is available most of this area will ship supplies in from and produce out to Vancouver, Prince Rupert and perhaps Bella Coola. In B. C. there is an estimated 22,608,000 acres classed as being suitable for agriculture, and a recent conservative estimate places 5,000,000 of this in the B. C. Peace River District. Approximately one million acres in the district is now occupied by farmers, with more than one third cultivated.

About half of this cultivated area is in grain, barley, wheat, oats, flax and rye in that order. The remainder is in hay and pasture, summerfallow, forage seed and miscellaneous crops. Long term average yields are conservatively estimated at barley 30 bushels, wheat 20 bushels, oats 40 bushels, flax 12 bushels, rye 25 bushels, hay 2 tons per acre. Average yields in pounds per acre of commonly grown forage seeds are alfalfa 150, red clover 150, alsike 200, sweet clover 300. These forage seed yields are what can normally be expected under reasonably sound management practices.

Live stock production continues to increase each year and now totals 16,000 cattle and 25,000 hogs. Cattle are mainly of the beef and dual purpose type but the number of dairy cattle is increasing as growing urban population increases the demand for fluid milk. Sheep numbers are negligible, totalling less than 1,500. There is room for large scale expansion in all livestock enterprises.

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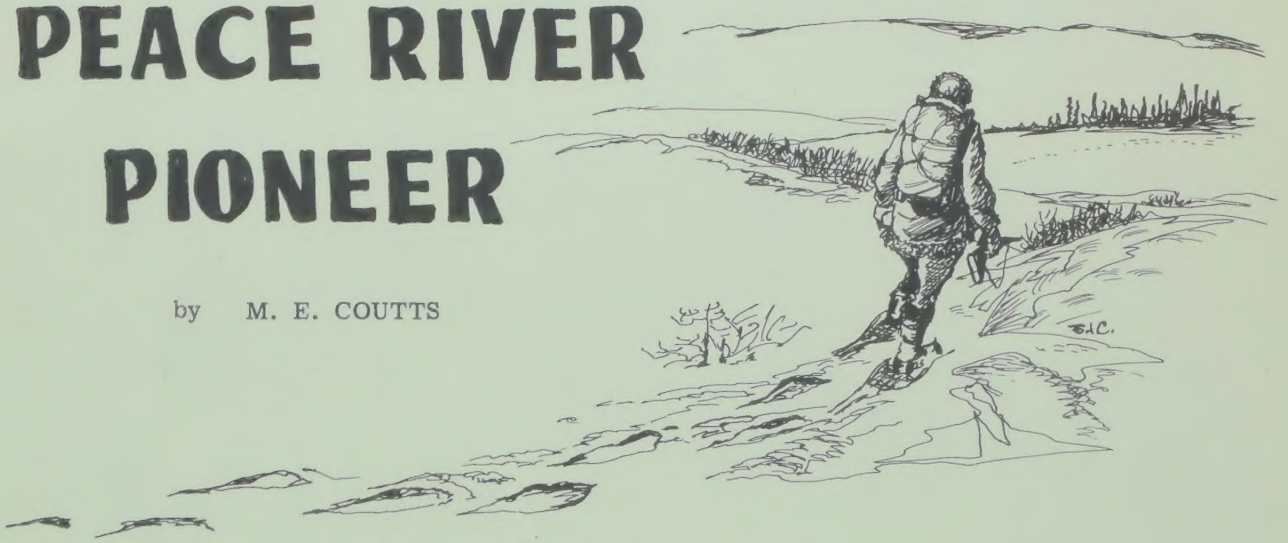
Hector Tremblay

PEACE RIVER PIONEER

by M. E. COUTTS



Take a trip through the farm country of the B.C. South Peace River District. Admire the gently swelling contours of the fields; the far vistas down wide valleys to distant hills; the beautiful contrasting colours of sky, of hill, of fallow or cropped fields; and wonder how this country appeared to the first white men who decided this place and no other should become home to them.

Hector Tremblay was the pioneer settler of this district. He had no intention of settling here when he left his Kamloops home in 1898 with four friends in an attempt to reach the Klondike goldfields.

Although the vast majority of those going to the Klondyke went by sea, Hector Tremblay and his companions decided to make the over 2,000 mile journey by land.

They collected an outfit of thirty horses, packed food, clothing, and some trade goods, then set off up the old Cariboo Highway. Although they were experienced frontiersmen with a good outfit, none realized the magnitude of the journey before them. Beyond Prince George they followed the railway survey line that had been cut for the Grand Trunk Pacific through the Pine Pass in 1896.

It was a passable route, but a very hard one. By the time winter had caught up with the party, the men were in the Little Prairie District of the Peace River and well past the mountain barrier. Here feed and water for the horses was abundant and the men decided to winter where they were. They settled in, spending the cold weather months trading with the Indians and trapping.

By the following spring, the men had decided that 500 such difficult miles were enough, and that even if this country offered no gold, other ways of making a living were to be found.

The party split up, but Hector Tremblay and Joe Bissette elected to stay in the area.

We remember their decision in the names of several creeks. There are two Bissette Creeks, one flows into the Pine River in the vicinity of Little Prairie, and one into the Pouce Coupe close to the village of Pouce Coupe, and there is a Tremblay Creek as a memory of Hector Tremblay.

To the two pioneers the whole district was wilderness. In places there were prairies with a little bush cover, but mostly the country was covered with poplar and in some areas, spruce or pine instead. The only roads were isolated Indian footpaths which led to the Hudson's Bay posts of Fort St. John and Saskatoon Lake.

Fort St. John was the nearest actual settlement. In those days it was on

Continued on Page 19

PART THREE OF

PETER DUNLEVEY

by

ALEX P. McINNIS

Synopsis:

By 1858 30,000 miners were working the Fraser River bars below the Canyon. To the miners the Interior was an unknown wilderness but in 1859 a party pushed upriver. They met an Indian who told them of gold on a river to the east and agreed to lead them to it. The miners left for Fort Kamloops for supplies and when they returned to the rendezvous at Lac La Hache discovered a potlatch in session. While their 12 pack horses rested they watched the Indians wrestle, race, and engage in other sports. As a gesture of good will the miners invited some of the Indians to supper, among them a widow with two attractive daughters. Later one miner made advances to the eldest daughter and was spurned. He gave her a drink of rum but the harsh liquor gagged her and she accused him of trying to kill her. The Indians immediately jumped to their feet and surrounded the miners. Silence fell over the gathering and tension rose.

THERE IN HIS PAN LAY THE FIRST GOLD OF CARIBOO

CONCLUSION

Then Baptiste spoke: "Jeem, ma frien', dis not good you do dis tam. Mebbe you not know Injin much, you make mistake. You mak' eet dronk dem gel, Shuswap mad lak' Hell. Shuswap good mans, good frien' spose not mad. Shuswap mad, he mean lak' Hell, mak eet plenty troub' for whiteman. Mebbe fight, mebbe keel. Dat not good. Me, I know ma frien' Jeem he's good man inside; good head, too, Jus' mak' wan mistake dis tam, das all." Offering his hand he continued: "Shake han' me, ma frien' Jeem!"

Jim's cool head and good nature assisting, he essayed to accept at once; but he still held the flask in his right hand and in passing it over to his left, it was adroitly siezed by the astute Indian in a single movement so fast and so perfectly timed, yet apparently effortless as to constitute a perfect dream of dexterous precision; so that the flask seemed to jump from Jim's hand to the Indian's as if by magnetic attraction. Probably, to get possession of the flask without a struggle was the main motive for the Indian's friendly gesture. Anyway it succeeded and they shook hands warmly. Then Baptiste stepped over to the fire where he picked up a stone and said: "Now, Agat, At-tus, I show you what kin devil fire water whiteman dreenk is not good for Injin." Holding the stone over the fire he broke the flask on it dashing its inflammable contents into the flames. He had to step back quickly to avoid the sudden flare up of bluish flames that leaped into the night air.

Waugh! You see! Whiteman devil fire water not good for Injin, Waugh!" he declaimed, evidently immensely pleased with his experimental demonstration. At this critical juncture one of the Shuswap chiefs, a man of middle age and short, broad figure, clad in fringed buckskins, in whose countenance intelligence and benevolent good feeling blended so well that it fairly shone with it, stepped up to Jim and shook hands also saying in rapid Chinook: "Conaway tillicum coopa Bacheese, skookum tillicum coopa Tyee Willyam mitlite!" (All friends of Baptiste are good friends of Chief Williams also.)

This was the famous Chief William of the William's Lake Shuswaps whose wise and eloquent councils during succeeding years helped so much to prevent the execution of the Chilcotin plan of joining forces with the Shuswaps and Denes that would surely have resulted in a general massacre of the whites then in the Cariboo.

Then he led his little following of chiefs around the circle of whites saying in his Chinook as he shook hands with each in turn: "Good bye, friend, Good feast! Good friends!" Then in Shuswap: "Cook statchem!" (Thank you!) This little ceremony over they all disappeared silently into the night.

All but Baptiste and Tomaah whom Dunlevey detained to tell them of his sudden decision to start out in the morning for the little river. He had been half expecting a break of the kind and was thankful it had ended no worse and to Baptiste for his quick thinking and acting that had forstalled a row.

As if to verify the wisdom of his decision, McLean now spoke up: "Jim, we shoulda just grabbed them wenches and if the bucks objected we coulda cleaned up on 'em." But Jim didn't agree. He said with his good natured grin: "You'd have had to clean up on me first, though, John, and I don't think you could do that." Immediately Baptiste stepped in between them facing McLean and said with a grin matching Jim's:

"You lak' sombodee clean up you, John? Me, I do! Demn queek, too, waugh! No tak long!"

But McLean had seen Sellers and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

DAWSON CREEK

by

HARRY GILES

You will often hear people wishing that they had lived in the "good old days" when history was being made and dynamic men and women were carving habitations out of the wilderness. Perhaps they do not realize that this work is continuing today, because there exists virgin country in British Columbia that attracts those with a pioneer spirit and reasonably good health. And the beauty of it is that it is possible to get to the heart of it by car, bus, train or plane so that the cost is within the reach of most people on this continent. There are millions of acres of land awaiting men and women and supplies, hospitals, schools and other services are within a reasonable distance. All that is necessary to reach this district is to get to Dawson Creek, the hub of the fabulous Peace River District of British Columbia.

The history of Dawson Creek is a record of pioneers who left the amenities of the more settled areas for the freedom and exhilaration of the frontier. The "Peace" has always held a glamour and beckoned hardy spirits since Alexander Mackenzie made his epochal journey to the Pacific Ocean. The establishment of trading posts at points on his journey proved the horticultural and agricultural possibilities of the country but it wasn't until the the prairies had been settled that attention was paid to this last great west.

In the early years of the present century a trickle of people trecked in

THE ROAD PARALLELING THE ELEVATORS IS THE ALASKA HIGHWAY. IT OFFICIALLY BEGINS AT THE TRIANGLE ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE PICTURE.

GOVT TRAVEL BUREAU PHOTO

THE VILLAGE OF DAWSON CREEK NESTLES IN A BOWL FORMED BY GENTLY ROLLING HILLS. CULTIVATED FARM LANDS SURROUND THE VILLAGE AND AGRICULTURE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE BACKBONE OF LOCAL ECONOMY. NOW, HOWEVER, A LUSTY NEWCOMER HAS APPEARED. GAS AND OIL DISCOVERIES MARK THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA.

to the Alberta section of the Peace River country and a few came to the B. C. section but it wasn't until after the first world war that attention was drawn to the northwestern section of the district.

In 1919 Dawson Creek was a very small hamlet situated one and a half miles south west of the present townsite. Until 1929 the village grew slowly, just enough to meet the needs of the surrounding country. It was a friendly, sociable, easy going community but in 1930 became as excited as a girl with a new pary dress. A railway was at last going to link the hamlet with Edmonton. The line had been built as far as Hythe, Alberta, two years before and was being extended to the Peace River section of B. C. Finally at 6:30 p. m. on January 15, 1931, the first train pulled into the present site of Dawson Creek. There was a brief ceremony and the "last" spike was driven by two early settlers, Mrs. Fanny Chase and Frank DeWetter. Two hours later the spike disappeared and hasn't been seen since.

Although the train had arrived, the hamlet of Dawson Creek was still one

Continued on page 21

IMPERIAL OIL PHOTO

At one time over 500 teams were freighting grain from the Peace River Block to Alberta

EARLY DAYS in the Peace River

by H. GILES and W. HARPER

First hand accounts of early settlers are usually very interesting and should be preserved. The Peace River District of British Columbia is fortunate in still having a few of the "originals" left who are capable of carrying our imagination back to the very early days of settlement by recording their experiences in a readable and concise manner. One of these is Mr. W. O. (Wes) Harper, an original member of the Board of Trade which was formed several years before the old town was moved to its present site. He is now Honorary President of the Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce and the following is taken from an address given at the twenty-first anniversary of the arrival of the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway (now known as the Northern Alberta Railway) at Dawson Creek.

"I feel honored to represent the members of the Chamber of Commerce of 1931, many of who have since passed away. I might name those who were active members, and I hope I have not missed any because the minutes of that time are not available. Bill Bullen, John Love, Irvin Groh, Bill Reasbeck, Ed. Breault, Frank DeWetter, Cy Smith, Jim Bond all of whom have since passed away. Fred Newby, Johnny Tempel, H. Morrow, and Ed Patterson are still with us. Paul Dalscheid, Jay Ken, Jack Hall, and Alf Sharp are living at the coast. Others living here at that time and who moved from the old town to the new were Fred Hall, John Hall, Johnny Peebles, Harrison Hall and Bill Burrows.

Our Chamber at that time was very active and although the town was small at the coming of steel, the moving from the old town and the arrival of construction crews made it a pretty busy place. We had made a determined effort to have the steel come into the old town but because of the loss of elevation the railway company claimed it was necessary for the town to be moved so that the extension west could be carried on at the same grade level.

The ceremony on arrival of the first train took place just east of the present depot and addresses were made by several notables. Driving the spike was done by two early settlers Mrs. Fanny Chase and Frank DeWetter. About two hours later the famous spike had disappeared and has not been heard of since. The old timers blamed it on progress because up to that time doors were very seldom locked and stealing was unheard of. For instance in the old town I operated a gas pump which was left open at all times so that anyone could help himself if he needed gas but I will say I had a pretty good check on those getting gas as the number of cars could be counted on two hands. I do not know of a single time when the customer failed to come in later to pay.

I might mention at this time that when the steel arrived at Pouce Coupe in December they also had a spike driving ceremony. It was done by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

Around the Towns

by ARTHUR DOWNS

BITS AND PIECES FROM CITY AND COMMUNITY FROM KAMLOOPS TO WHITEHORSE AND FROM PRINCE GEORGE TO PRINCE RUPERT

Along with the Grey Cup and Christmas, the announcement about the 700 mile Peace River gas pipeline is old news, but one aspect of the pipeline that will never grow old is its effect on the Northwest. Everyone knows that one advantage of natural gas is its convenience as a heating fuel, but this is a surface benefit. The other benefits will far outweigh these.

Before the news was a week old engineers were in Fort St. John drafting plans for a $5,000,000 plant which will extract daily 300 tons of sulphur from the gas and major Oil Companies are about to spend some $45,000,000 drilling for new wells. And with a guarantee of plentiful fuel, industries will spring up along the entire route. Development of Prince George's brick clay deposits, Quesnel's Diatomite, and cheaper power for the Interior are three predictable advantages. Those unpredictable will undoubtedly be as breathtaking as the original announcement.

Another effect of the gas is that the B.C. Power Commission is about to build a $3-4,000,000 thermal generating plant at Prince George. While the plant will be big enough to provide surplus power for industry, to Interior residents it is something of a let down. For years Government after Government promised a hydro for the Central Interior, and while the new plant will be welcomed, many people feel it is akin to being promised steak and ending up with pork and beans.

Today the magic word is power. When the B.C. Power Commission started building the John Hart installation on Vancouver Island many doubted its sanity. The power would never be used, critics said. Now, less than ten years later, what has happened? The Commission cannot build fast enough to keep pace with demand in the area. The same holds for the Interior. A surplus of power would attract industry as surely as Cariboo gold attracted miners in the 1860's. And as that gold originally opened the Interior to settlers, so would the gold of surplus power open the Interior to Industry.

Of course mention anything about a dam in the Interior and the salmon interests scream. Nothing must be allowed to disturb the streams. Industrialization of the Interior must be sacrificed to fish. How long, people wonder, oh, how long can this state continue?

Surely it is inevitable that our water resources cannot be used exclusively for spawning salmon. Where would Canada be if the Hudson's Bay Company had been permitted to keep the country as its own trapping ground? Where would Canada be if the Western plains had been permitted to remain a sea of grass for buffalo and Indians? Allow in the settlers and you lose the money from furs, said the Hudson's Bay Company. Kill the buffalo and you kill us, said the Indians. Put in a dam and you destroy the fishing industry, say the salmon people.

Well, settlers came and they certainly didn't kill the Hudson Bay Company. If they did the Company is the continent's most robust corpse. Similarly the Indians are still with us, and there are still enough buffalo to provide the occasional steak and the mounties with their buffalo hide coats. Surely ways can be found of getting salmon into the spawning grounds, and if not those likely to suffer financially should be compensated and not permitted to retard what is inevitable.

The Kamloops Sentinel, the Williams Lake Tribune, the Quesnel Observer, the Bridge River-Lillooet News, and the Prince George Citizen, to name a few Interior papers, have carried editorials pointing out that it isn't fair to retard Interior development to protect fish. Many a property owner has had land expropriated when trying to hold up construction of highways, railways, or similar projects. In the interests of the many he was bought out and that was that. It is only fair, in the end all benefit. So be it with salmon.

On a lighter, more cheerful note the Prince George Citizen was able to see the bright side of last November's record cold snap. Said the paper: 'Peering ahead into the months of frost, snow, ice, slush, sunless wind and windless cold--it is cheering to meditate on how uncomfortable this is going to be for the quack grass, the chick weed, the dandelion, and the cut worm.

In Prince George, 1955 was a most prosperous year, with city construction valued at nearly $3,000,000. While figures on general economy aren't yet available, 1954 totals are an excellent business barometer. That year the city's gross business turnover was $20,000,000. In the city some 1,200 employees collected $2,600,000 in wages, and in the district some 8,000 men were employed in nearly 600 logging and lumbering operations.

Evidence of Prince George's continuing growth is contained in a North-West Telephone Company report. The Company planned for an increase of about 440 telephones during 1955, but the figure reached over 650. In fact 1955's increase alone is more than the total number of phones in Prince George in 1947, when the entire city had only 630 phones.

A sad note during the year was the death of A. M. Patterson, mayor from 1927 to 1944. Mr. Patterson was a 'Freeman' of the city, the only citizen ever so honored, and is generally credited with keeping the city from going bankrupt during the depression. During funeral services most business houses voluntarily closed in silent tribute to the well known figure.

One item that recently ruffed local fur was a report that Prince Georgeites are the stingiest people in Canada. This startling conclusion came from the Department of National Revenue. After examining Income tax forms and tallying exemptions claimed for charitable donations, the Department reported that Prince George businessmen gave only $6.38, compared to Kelowna's $33.00. The businessmen, however, had a plausible

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alibi. They give generously but can't be bothered keeping receipts.

As one leading businessman told the Prince George Citizen "with our economy the way it is a man could lose $100.00 worth of business while he grubbed around trying to justify a $20.00 deduction. We are so busy enjoying the prosperity of Canada's most prosperous community we haven't time or incentive to save the scraps of receipts of charitable donations to affix to our income tax returns.

While Prince George citizens were busy getting themselves dubbed 'meanies', Williams Lake residents were out getting themselves some top notch publicity. The village's entry of a stage coach in the Grey Cup parade aroused more interest than all the beauty queens, and that is really interest. In fact the stage coach was so well received that the Grey Cup committee wanted it to meet all incoming trains and airplanes. However the coach isn't as sturdy as it was 60 years ago and was limited to meeting the Calgary rooters and to the actual parade.

Localites who appeared with the exhibit were Claude Huston as driver, Tommy Madison as shotgun guard, Felix Kohnke as a miner, complete with genuine burro and beard, and Mrs. Bert Roberts, Mrs. Alf Bracewell, Walter Kohnke, Al Carswell, Bert Roberts, Bill Sharpe, Buck Mammel, Herb Nobel, and Alf Eagle as outriders. Inside the coach in frontier costumes were Miss Elizabeth Stevenson, Mrs. F. Kohnke, Miss Joan Huston, Mrs. T. Madison, and 'Buck' Benny Abbott as a gambler. By the way, Buck, were you using the same deck you clipped us with a couple of years back?

During November the man with the scythe caught up with four well known Cariboo oldtimers. In Williams Lake Roland York Gibbons and George Abbey died in their eighty-second year, and in Quesnel Charles 'Cockie' Evans and John Strand crossed the great divide.

Fifty years ago George Abbey ploughed the land where Williams Lake now stands. In those days the area was part of the Borland ranch, and it was an era when ox and mule drawn freight wagons creaked over the 300 mile Cariboo wagon road, when stage coaches coupled to spirited horses were the fastest means of travel, and when the entire area north of Quesnel was the domain of the miner and trapper.

John Strand was one of the best known oldtimers of the north Cariboo. He came to the area in 1892 and he constructed many of Quesnel's early buildings. He built the original Cariboo Hotel in 1911, and rebuilt it after it burned down in 1916. He built many of Quesnel's houses, and also the Beaver Pass Road House, once a favorite stopping place on the Barkerville road.

In Quesnel last December a fitting memorial to the district's best known resident officially came to life. It was the Gerald Baker Memorial Hospital, a magnificent tribute to the late Gerald Ramsey Baker, the man who came on an emergency call in 1912 and stayed a life-time. The three story concrete structure cost almost $1,000,000 to build and is the most modern of its type in Canada. It has accomodation for 37 adult patients and 10 children, with main services such as kitchen, laundry, and heating unit designed to serve a hospital almost twice as big. Because of this, when necessary another wing can be added at minimum cost. The hospital is the first built in B. C. under the Hospital Improvement District Plan.

Two Cabinet Ministers attended the opening, the Honorable Eric Martin and the Honorable Ralph Chetwyn. Both were impressed and pleased with the building and instead of a "cut the tape then run" ceremony common to many dignitaries, the Ministers stayed behind and showed keen interest in everything from the ultra-modern operating rooms to the gleamingly efficient kitchen and from the vari-colored wards to the modernistic waiting room.

Many Quesnel residents deserve credit for the new building, but Keith Yorston, Paul Werbecki, Ceal Tingley, Bill Speare, John A. Fraser, and Warren Woodhurst, receive special plaudits for their work on the original Hospital Improvement District Committee, Then on another angle, to Chuck Beath goes credit for insisting that a Hospital Improvement District wasn't too ambitious an undertaking for Quesnel. And from where he sleeps in his fir and spruce shaded grave under starry Cariboo skies that he loved so well, we can almost hear Doc Baker saying "Thanks people. But you know, I really don't deserve it."

Quesnel's hope of becoming a city in 1956 has faded. From all indications the B.C. Government is revising the Municipal Act so that a population of 6,000 is necessary before a community can become a city. Quesnel will become a town first, since its population is about 5,000. However if the area continues its present growth it won't be long qualifying for city status.

Evidence that the community has outgrown its frontier atmosphere was shown last Halloween. Instead of innocent pranks, vandals did over $1,-

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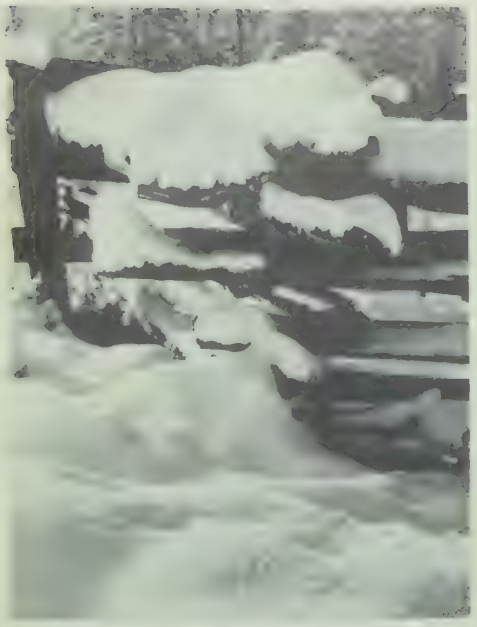

WHITE MAGIC IS THE TITLE MRS. KIMOFF GAVE TO HER PICTURE OF WINTER. THIS YEAR THOUGH THE WHITE MAGIC IS ALL TOO PLENTIFUL FOR EVEN THE MORST POETIC OF NORTHWEST RESIDENTS.

000property damage. Fourteen parking meters were completely wrecked, a 'welcome' sign erected by the Board of Trade at the north end of town was destroyed, and a wooden marker on the road leading to the Plywood plant was chopped down.

In a lighter vein the Royal Bank received a Halloween face lifting when across the front door a person or persons placed a 12 foot sign reading 'House of Commons'. It was a left-handed compliment to manager Ray Commons, who has held court in the red brick house longer than most people can remember. While the village placed a $100.00 reward for information on those responsible for wrecking the parking meters, there is apparantly no reward for the bank sign hangers. However a report persists that the son of a pioneer merchant was involved. Know anything about it, Don?

South to Mile Zero on the Cariboo Highway the village of Lillooet received a pleasant Halloween treat when the B.C. Electric announced plans to irrigate land in East Lillooet. The district has long been known for its fine quality potatoes, tomatoes, berries, and other field produce, and with irrigation another 600 acres will be brought under cultivation.

In 1953 in the district there were 500 acres of tree fruits, tomatoes, and other truck garden produce, 110 acres of hops, and over 1,000 acres of irrigated hay land. The area is on the average frost free until November, last year for instnace when Central and Northern B.C. was gripped by sub-zero temperatures Lillooet still had apples on trees, roses blooming, and strawberry vines bearing.

The area is well situated to supply Vancouver and to even ship produce to Kitimat. There is a direct rail connection via the P.G.E. and the C. N.R. to the Aluminum center and also via Squamish and the Coast. And in a recent speech to the Prince George Rotary club Harry Jomini, resident engineer for the Alcan operation, pointed out that there is a vast market in Kitimat for Interior products.

At present Kitimat residents consume weekly 20 tons of potatoes, 8 tons of other vegetables, 2 tons of tomatoes, 2 of lettuce, 54,000 gallons of milk, 54,500 pounds of butter, 700 cases of eggs, 25 tons of meat, 4 tons of poultry, and 225 cases of apples.

Some produce is shipped from as far south as California, although almost every pound could be grown in southern and central B.C. And as Kitimat grows so will the demand for food, assuring producers of a ready market.

In Kitimat itself there are now over 1,000 homes on the townsite, new business houses open just about every week, a new phone system is operating, and there are over 1,500 cars in the area, although it still has less than 10 miles of road. By the end of 1958 Kitimat will be B.C.'s fourth largest city, with a population of about 20,000. Then it will be turning out 270,000 tons of aluminum yearly and total investment will approach $500,000,000.

Incidentally the 350 square mile lake backing up behind the 317 foot Kenney dam near Vanderhoof is only 17 feet below the desired mark. At present rate of fill, water level will hit the 280 foot target by next year.

One misconception about Kitimat is that it is a job hunters haven. Such isn't the case. Alcan, the Union, and the Unemployment Insurance Commission have repeatedly warned unemployed not to come to Kitimat on speculation. The Allied Aluminum Workers Council recently requested all workers to warn friends and relatives who are thinking of coming to Kitimat to check with the N.E.S. office andwith Kitimat Unions to see if help is required. This way, points out the Union, people can save themselves unnecessary hardship, expense, embarrassment, and in extreme cases the possibility of being charged with vagrancy.

Meanwhile Terrace, a hop, skip, and jump across the mountains from Kitimat, continues its lusty progress. The B.C. Telephone Company recently replaced the three position switchboard with a five place board and have completed a $51,000 outside plant project. The Federal Government has indicated that it may build a Federal Building next year, plans for replacing the Civic Center which burned last year have been completed, and a new business block was recently opened.

A sad note during the year was the death of George Little, who founded the village in 1910. Mr. Little first came to the area over the Kitimat trail in the early 1900's, and liked the country so well that after 1912 he left only once. About 1917 he planted a row of trees on the main street and the trees grew with the village. They now give Terrace the distinction of being the only Interior B.C. community with a tree lined main street, and are a living memorial to the man everyone knew so well.

Farther west along Highway 16 Prince Rupert is attempting to persuade Frobisher Ventures Ltd. that the area is the ideal outlet for the Company's proposed $50,000,000 hydro-smelter project. As City Council pointed out, if Prince Rupert was used instead of Alice Arm for the smelter site, the Company would not have to bring power over 6,000 ft mountains. In addition they would have a fully developed townsite, a harbor 100 per cent better than Alice Arm, a rail and road terminus, and $25,000,000 already spent in the city.

But scarcely was the news out when a cry went up about salmon. The run would suffer and thousands of dollars worth of damage would be done to nets and gear by residue from the smelter, said the defenders of the fish. "Such is not the case at all," Alderman T. Norton Youngs told the Prince Rupert Chamber of Commerce. "A smelter in Prince Rupert," he said, "would definitely not affect the Skeena River."

Of course even it the smelter affected the salmon run that is no excuse for not building it. The day is rapidly approaching when fisheries interests will have to put an actual dollar and cents value on every river and stream with headwaters in the Interior. That way we will know just how valuable the fish are, and also how valuable they aren't. If industrial development of a stream or river is more value economically, then the salmon must go. Conversely if the dollar value of salmon in a particular area is the most valuable then they stay. It must be remembered that Canadian fishermen catch only about one half of salmon that spawn in B.C. waters, American fishermen catch the rest. And remember, too, that the Americans didn't hesitate to dam the Columbia River, despite its mighty salmon run.

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Madigan won a nation wide contest sponsored by Massey-Harris-Ferguson Company. Mr. Madigan won the honors in a Company sales and service contest. He and his wife were sent on an expense paid trip to the Royal Winter Fair at Toronto with numerous side trips to the States. Besides being most satisfactory to Mr. and Mrs. Madigan, the event gave considerable publicity to the Bulkley Valley.

Also at Telkwa the Interior's only producing coal mine is steadily increasing production after the set-back when Columbia Cellulose Company switched to oil fuel and a monthly market for 3,500 tons of coal disappeared. However Bulkley Valley Colleries started a extensive domestic sales campaign and results have been so encouraging that production has increased to two-thirds former capacity. The coal from a newly discovered seam, is in many respects of higher grade than Alberta coal. The Company has carried out extensive scientific tests with the coal and are always ready to provide information to either current or prospective customers.

The village of Vanderhoof, home town of cowboy author Rich Hobson, is on the receiving end of much publicity these days. Many local citizens are mentioned in Rich's new book "Nothing too Good for a Cowboy", and it is already outselling his first success "Grass Beyond the Mountains."

The new book contains 22 chapters of highly interesting reading, including an account of a horse drive through Vancouver. There are probably still many coast residents who remember being awakened one morning to see a horde of stetson waving cowboys thundering down back alleys, their mounts hurdling picket fences, and galloping wildly across carefully tended lawns andflower gardens. Since no law suits were filed after the event, Rich figures that residents must have considered the episode a most realistic nightmare.

Through a special arrangement with Rich, readers can buy an autographed copy of the book plus a year's subscription to the Digest for $5.00. Details are on page 5.

Also at Vanderhoof the community of Engen is the latest Interior center lit up by the B.C. Power Commission. Last fall a line was built from the Commission's Vanderhoof plant, giving Engen its first electricity. The service is another example of the excellent work being done by the Commission. Since its advent into the Interior less than 11 years ago, the Commission has contributed greatly to the standard of living by providing cheaper and more abundant electricity.

From Fort St. John comes word that the P.G.E. bridge over the Peace River will be built about four miles upriver from the Alaska Highway bridge. Initial cost has been estimated at $3,000,000. The structure will be 700 feet long, rise 100 feet above the water, and on the south side will require an earth fill 80 feet deep.

To a Fort St. John resident went the honorof the first construction contract on the natural gas pipeline. Tommy Wilde, horse wrangler and big game guide, landed a $1,000,000 contract for clearing right of way between Fort St. John and Azouetta Lake in the Pine Pass. Tommy is something of a northern swashbuckler, originally coming into the area with a horse, saddle, and chaps. He contracted for Bechtel on the Canol pipeline during the second World War and put his savings into a ranch in the Peace River. Never one to worry about stiff collars and other amenities of civilization, Tommy's favorite clothes are denims and cowboy boots, topped with his famous $50.00 stetson.

Now that Davy Crockett has died back into history, the Alaska Highway News at Fort St. John thinks we should resurrect a hero of our own to counter the next United States backwoodsman to be re-vitalized. Says the News: "A monument to Alexander Mackenzie, the slim, fair-haired young Scotch adventurer who founded Fort St. John could be erected on the brow of the hill above Taylor Flat, overlooking the Alaska Highway Bridge and the new railway bridge to be erected to the west.

The dominating figure of a group should be shown wearing a Scotch bonnet, a tartan over the shoulder. The composition should include the figure of a typical French voyageur and an Indian or two. The proper time for unveiling such a monument would be in 1958, the centenary year of B.C., the 165th anniversary of Mackenzie's amazing exploit, and undoubtedly the year when the first railway service will be officially inaugurated from the Pacific into the valley which Mackenzie explored.

And speaking of history, at Ashcroft another well known Cariboo resident crossed the great divide. He was Judge Frederic Calder, who died at his Bonaparte ranch at the age of 87. He had lived in Ashcroft district for 53 years, and for over 30 years was a county court judge in the Cariboo. The Judge was well known throughout the Cariboo and his passing severs yet another connection with the Province's colorful past.

In Kamloops last November the Interior took another stride towards a diversified economy when the Honorable P. A. Gaglardi officially opened Royalite Oil Company's new $8,000,000 refinery. The plant is the most modern of its type and size in Canada, and is designed to process 5,000 barrels of crude oil daily. A newcomer to B.C., Royalite is making lusty strides. Six years ago the Company was virtually unknown, now it has over 700 employees, operates over 350 service stations, and is currently opening at least one gas station a week in B.C.

Last fall Kamloops district also had the distinction of having five schools opened in one day. Minister of Education, Ray Williston, performed the

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honors, and as he hurried from school to school he noted that it was probably the first time in any country that a Minister of Education had the opportunity of opening five schools in one district in one day. If the area continues its present growth next year the Minister will probably be called upon to open at least another five.

In Kamloops retail sales for 1955 are expected to comfortably exceed 1954's total of $15,000,000. Bank clearings were up 20 per cent over the 1954 figure, with clearings of over $12,400,000 for September and October alone. For the first 10 months of 1955, building permits were almost $3,300,000, a figure that on a per capita basis is over three times Vancouver's total. Another evidence of continued growth is motor vehicle registrations. In 1945 Kamloops boasted a total of 1,892 vehicles, by 1950 it had 4,274, and for 1955 more than 7,300.

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Meanwhile some 1,200 miles north Whitehorse continues its growth. Last year brought it a sewar system, water mains, new residents, and millions of dollars worth of new buildings. Next year holds indications of being every bit as prosperous, with the added assurance of having the skyline lit by an oil refinery. Shamrock Petroleums have announced plans to build a 2-3,000 barrel a day refinery, and hope to start active production in 1957.

Also in 1955 an event occurred in Whitehorse that sends newspaper publishers to the aspirin bottle or to the liquor store, depending on individual taste. It seems that the Whitehorse Star designed a very attractive advertisement for pioneer business firm Taylor and Drury. When the paper appeared the advertisement was a dream--it was attractive, informative, it had balance, it had appeal, in fact it had everything but the company's name.

Since advertisers have been known to get most annoyed at such events the Star was horrified. As the editor admitted, such action was tantamount to turning up at a cornation in red flannel underwear. However all ended well and of course the Star has our sympathy. A magazine called the "Northwest Digest" last summer omitted a prepaid half page advertisement for the Bella Coola Board of Trade. Now we ask, is there any better way of getting into the good graces of local businessmen?

And speaking of getting into people's good graces, a black bear in Kitimat didn't have a clue how to go about it. His lack of culture and extreme ill-breeding was immediately obvious whenhe entered the hotel lobby by way of the front window rather than the door. Then he removed any chances of getting a room by scaring the desk clerk into the chandelier. Still trying to be sociable despite this affront he entered the beer parlour and got so annoyed when no one stayed to say hello that he huffily tossed table and chairs at the retreating waiter. Then feeling a bit better he sauntered into the lounge in the hope of spending a social evening. The lone guest looked up from his paper, paled, and also departed without as much as a civil word to the now thoroughly annoyed bruin. Smarting under such cavalier treatment he decided to get his own back and took his business elsewhere, leaving haughtily via the front window.

When order was restored and windows and doors barricaded all concerned were inclined to laugh off the affair. All, that is, except the insurance company. They couldn't even muster a sickly grin as they shelled out for a new window.

THE END

Continued from Page 8

the south side of the Peace River, six miles upstream from the confluence of the Pine and the Peace. The Post contained a Hudson's Bay Co. store served by a factor and a clerk. The Reveillon Freres maintained a store and trader and the Roman Catholic mission church was served by a priest during the summer months.

Besides the Indians the only inhabitants were a few white trappers. In the Rolla district Coleman, Stansfield and Baumgartner had cabins. To the west Nels Nielson, Ernie Knutson, Perry and Denny trapped.

The first thing Tremblay discovered about his new country was that the Indian trails were too narrow to use for even pack trails. He hired Indians to go ahead of his horses to brush out trees and cut away overhanging branches and in 1905 he cut the first pack trail to Fort St. John from the Pouce Coupe Prairie.

He made many trips throughout the district and finally found the place he preferred for his home site. It was on the Pouce Coupe River, three miles from the present village of Pouce Coupe. He admired the lay of the land, its fertility, and the river running past. In 1907 he completed and occupied his trading post and settled down to farm and to trade. In 1908 he sent for his wife, but before he could meet her he had to cut a trail to Spirit River in the Alberta section of the Peace River Block. It led across a fire swept area, and was too rough for even wagons and they had to be left in Spirit River. The family packed the household goods in on horses, cows, and oxen. The three young Tremblay children had to be left at Grouard mission so that they could go to school.

With Mrs. Tremblay came three new settlers, Mr. and Mrs. Jo Walton and Jo Lacombe. Unfortunately Mrs. Walton died the following winter and left Mrs. Tremblay with the doubtful distinction of being the only white woman in the entire district.

She had two more children, now Mrs. Pat Therrien and Mrs. Frost of Pouce Coupe, and besides having to contend with the isolation, she had other problems common to the frontier. One of these was standing guard over the cows to ward off bears who learned that beef on the hoof makes a tasty meal. However her husband was in his rightful setting and to Mrs. Tremblay that was compensation for the disadvantages of frontier life.

Hector Tremblay was a man who always wanted to see and to experience what lay beyond the next hill, to admire the next river, to try the fertileness of the next valley. He was a rough old Frenchman, imperious master in the new country he loved. He was just, and generous to a fault in his dealings with poor trapper and struggling settler alike.

If there was a food shortage he shared supplies with any who needed help. If he had a few choice items in his trading post he made sure a proportion went to each of his customers. Since his was the only store until the first influx of settlers arrived after the land was opened for settlement in 1912, he had all the money in the district. If he didn't have it at first, in the normal course of trading the money ended up in his pockets anyway. However he was so generous that he made little profit on his trading ventures, in fact when he died he left very little money. But he did leave a far more lasting legacy than coin of the realm.

Many of the roads in the South Peace area follow trails cut by Hector Tremblay. Many pioneer families remember him for kindness and encouragement in times of difficulty. Many a new settler remembers him for help when it was needed and for food purchased with little more than a promise to repay it as soon as possible. These things are a far nobler gift than money, and are an epitaph that does not tarnish or decay with age.

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AGRICULTURE IN THE PEACE
Continued from Page 7

Until full surveys have been made of the areas in the newer sections of the district which have been - and are still being opened up by new roads built by oil companies in their search for oil it is impossible to give an accurate estimate of farming land. Many acres of valley and park lands suitable for agriculture are being discovered as prospecting progresses. The majority of the valleys grow lush vegetation and are wide enough to be a very attractive proposition for mixed farming and ranching.

Beekeeping is making headway in the Peace. The average yield per colony this year, which has not been the best, will be over 150 lbs. Some "yards" have done exceptionally well and others where one of our rare hailstorms hit, did not do so well. The highest yield reported this year was in one of the Peace River Honey Company yards where one hive yielded 374 lbs. of weighed honey. This company had 1,500 colonies scattered throughout the district. Besides producing an excellent honey from the clover fields the benefit of the bees as pollinators is marked by increase in seed set. There is a Beekeeper's Association at Dawson Creek and there are a number of apiarists with a few hives up to several hundred.

When we look into the future we can not help being optimistic. I am not a blind booster but after seeing the development that has taken place during over thirty years of close contact and twenty-five years continuous residence in the Peace River District I would be a very pessimistic individual If I failed to see a wonderful future. This is no Eldorado but is a country that will, over a period of years, give good returns to anyone who will use good judgment and is not afraid of work. Some years our winters may be cold and long but they are usually bright and sunny and the cold is far more easily endured than the cold foggy weather of the coast region.

With the completion of the Pacific Great Eastern railway mixed farming should take a boost. Livestock thrive and are free of many diseases found in the more humid sections. Insect pests and plant diseases are negligible compared with warmer areas. If freight rates to Vancouver don't go up there is no reason why the stock and poultry raisers to the south should not take the bulk of their feed from the Peace River District. Beef, pork, eggs and poultry have to be imported from other parts of Canada by the coastal cities, and this would be a logical market for our produce. The opening of this market should mean prosperity for this section and could possibly reduce the cost to the consumer. There is no district in the west capable of producing livestock of better quality or at less cost than right here.

The quality of the soil varies as does the weather but there is room for almost any type of farming. On the benches of the rivers, particularly the Peace, sweet corn with well filled cobs ten inches long is grown regularly, and tomatoes ripened in quantity. Watermelons and cantaloupe are also ripened and cucumbers grown commercially. I do not wish to give the impression that this condition is general but there are places where it is done. The writer usually has all the vegetables he needs in his garden but cannot grow any of the items mentioned with any degree of certainty.

Comparing the Peace River District with other farming areas of the west the future looks very bright. Our markets are expanding, land can still be bought cheaply (Government land is still available for purchase at $2.50 to $5.00 per acre), taxes are low on agricultural land (this year .05 for general and 15.94 mills for school) and over head compares favorably with other farming sections. The prosperity of the Peace River Country is expanding rapidly. What the future holds in store is in the hands of the people. Providence has done his share and with more people this area can become one of the brightest spots in Canada. There is still time to grow with the country and help shape its destiny, and at the same time earn a prosperous living.

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DAWSON CREEK
Continued from page 11

and a half miles from the end of steel. Residents fought vainly for extension but the Company demurred. The hamlet was in a hollow and it wasn't practical to build trackage to it. Townspeople shrugged and since the railway wasn't coming to them they went to it. In the winter of 1931 all buildings that were worth moving were brought to the railway townsite and then people sat back to ride out the depression.

Those in the new town held on, some because they had faith in the possibilities of the new country, and others because they knew of no better place to go. Their faith was rewarded because all through the depression there was a slow but steady growth. A light plant was installed by the late A. P. Everest to supply the 250 people, five grain elevators sprang up to handle the grain, and other buildings gradually appeared. By 1936 population had risen to 500 and the village was incorporated.

Life in the village continued to be on the quiet side, but this was changed on March 2, 1942 when a detachment of American troops arrived and construction started on a project that became known as the Alaska Highway. From then on Dawson Creek became a "boom" town with a capital "B".

From a village of about 750 it grew to many thousands almost overnight - there is no record of the actual figures. Camps and living quarters spread for miles around. The pessimists predicted a terrible slump when the highway was completed but it did not happen. While thousands of transients did move out the village itself was larger, had more amenities and no one went broke. In February 1943 the explosion of a large store of dynamite and caps killed several people and completely wiped out one business block with the exception of the Co-operative store. It was a tragic affair but as soon as the debris was cleared new and far better buildings were erected. On October 31st 1950 another milestone was reached when the igniting of a gas flare announced the arrival of natural gas at Dawson Creek. This is the first community in British Columbia to be served by this fuel.

The next event of importance was the opening of the John Hart Highway, giving the area a direct road outlet with the rest of B. C. This has brought thousands of people from California and other parts of the States through this wonderful scenic route from California to the Alaska Highway. Further more it has given residents of B. C. a chance to get acquainted with their northern neighbors and also allowed these same neighbors to get to know those at the coast. And the tourist trade is only starting. The hard sur-

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GOVT. TRAVEL BUREAU PHOTOS

facing of the Hart Highway and the Valleyview - Whitecourt short road to Edmonton will draw many thousands.

The extension of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway to Dawson Creek will be a bigger event than the arrival of the Northern Alberta Railways. What it will mean to the people here and the business men in Vancouver cannot be estimated, but its effect will be far reaching. The permission of the U. S. A. for the import of natural gas means a further boost to this whole district. Besides the actual construction of the pipe line it means that drilling will be stepped up. Millions of dollars have already been spent in exploratory drilling and proving the field, but now that a market is assured several oil firms have signified their intention of pouring millions of dollars more into the field for intensive drilling.

Today the village of Dawson Creek is prosperous and looking confidentally to the future. Its main streets are blacktopped and all others gravelled. Cement or asphalt sidewalks are on business and older residential streets and as the wooden sidewalks need replacing permanent ones are built. The village owns its own water system bringing the supply from the Kiskatinaw River eleven miles to the west. At the end of October 975 water services were connected to the village mains. With the recent boundary extensions several miles of new mains will have to be laid next year and the

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number of connections will probably be doubled. Owing to overloading a new sewage disposal plant was constructed this year. Light and power are supplied by the B. C. Power Commission's natural gas driven plant of 3,800 KW capacity. There are 2,500 subscribers including 250 rural and extensions are continuing.

Financial affairs are taken care of by three chartered banks, Canadian Bank of Commerce, Toronto-Dominion Bank and the Bank of Montreal. The Toronto-Dominion has a new building nearly completed. Monthly bank clearings are averaging about $2,500,000. In addition to the chartered banks Dawson Creek has one of the largest Credit Unions in the province. The Lakeview Credit Union was organized in 1943 with a capital of six dollars. Today it has 4,500 shareholders with a capital of $1,684,000 cash on hand of $229,000 and outstanding loans of $1,260,000. Since incorporation it has loaned $5,271,498 and has written off as bad debts only $10,827. Reserves against bad debts are $16,000; deposits are $1,395,000 and in 1954 it moved into its own building which cost $125,000.

The headquarters of the Peace River Health Unit are at Dawson Creek. The territory covered by this unit is from Kelly Lake in the south to the Yukon border in the north, roughly 20,000 sq. miles. The Medical Officer's report for 1954 showed no serious epidemics. The birth rate is given as 34.4 per 1,000 (against 28.7 for the Dominion) and a death rate of 5.6 per 1,000 - a really healthy place to live!

Naturally a high birth rate means schools and Dawson Creek is doing its best to meet the needs. Classes range from kindergarten to first year university course and are attended by 1785 pupils. Accommodation is provided by a new high school, an eleven room elementary opened last fall and several older elementary schools and annexes. There is also Notre Dame School under the Sister of Providenc which has an attendance of 350 including a number of boarders. The public schools have a large dormitory for

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out of town pupils and busses bring in children from the closer areas.

The Sisters of Providence also operate a hospital and plans are underway for building a new 100 bed hospital in the spring at an estimated cost of $1,500,000.

A Memorial Arena has been erected which will eventually have a seating capacity of 3,500. The walls are concrete block and roof is aluminum. The construction allows an uninterrupted view of the whole arena as there are no supporting pillars. Over $100,000 has already been spent and when the interior is all completed at least another $50,000 will have been expended. An open air swimming pool operates during the summer months. The pool, which is heated, cost approximately $25,000. Both these undertakings have been made possible by voluntary contributions of the inhabitants. Dawson Creek also has an excellent nine hole golf course picturesquely laid out adjoining the Alaska Highway two miles from town. Hockey and baseball teams, both senior and junior, play in season. Practically all other sports are indulged in. In addition to the arena which is used in winter for hockey and other ice sports, there is a six sheet curling rink. Incidentally when curling starts it is advisable to make an appointment if you wish to do business with a curler. In Dawson Creek curling is something like golf - only worse - not a sport but a disease, and appears to be highly infectious.

The Exhibition Board has recently purchased 160 acres adjoining the town for fair grounds. A half mile track is being graded and it is hoped within a very few years fair buildings will be erected and improvements made so that all outdoor sports can be held there. A splendid exhibition is held every year in August, the arena, curling rink and adjoining buildings being used to house the exhibits. Not the least is the horticultural section which is always a big surprise to outside visitors. The Horticultural Society has been in existence for nearly twenty years and is credited with being the inspiration of many of the lovely gardens to be seen in the village and surrounding district.

There is a public library with a choice of 7,000 books of their own and a further 18,000 volumes on the shelves of the Public Library Commission in an adjoining building. The average monthly circulation is 2,500 volumes. For the entertainment of residents in the village and surrounding districts

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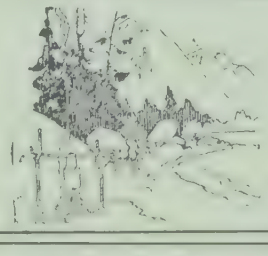

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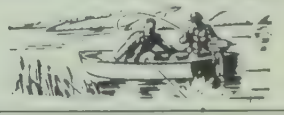

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south of the Peace River, the Dawson Creek Film Council distributes National Film Board films. It owns two projectors - one with a power unit which travels on circuits reaching from East Pouce Coupe to Little Prairie in the west and from Tupper Creek in the south to the Peace River in the north. About thirty films are always available and the showings are very popular being attended by thousands during the year. There are two first class picture houses in the village.

An active Canadian Club brings in excellent speakers. The Alaska Music Trails is an organization bringing some of the finest musical artists to the village. The Dawson Creek Choral Society of fifty members is gaining in popularity and ability. Their concerts are very much appreciated.

There are a number of service clubs and fraternal organizations functioning in the village and doing a splendid community work. The senior Chamber of Commerce has been in existence since the "old town" days of 1928 and is active in promoting industry and development in the district. A very active Junior Chamber of Commerce has been working since 1944 and has been very energetic in village affairs particularly in getting out voters at municipal elections and promoting safety.

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The governing body of the village is a commission of five members but owing to the growth taking place it is evident that they will soon have to apply for a city charter. Fire protection is well taken care of by an efficient brigade of fifteen volunteers, two pumpers each with a capacity of 600 gallons per minute, over 3,000 feet of standard hose and 125 fire hydrants. So highly is Dawson Creek fire protection rated that the insurance rates within the village limits are Class "A" which is the same as Vancouver.

Practically all businesses are well represented. In the grain trade eight elevators have a storage capacity of over one million bushels. Several forage seed firms have their buyers stationed here and the Alberta Co-operative Seed Growers have a large warehouse on track. Several wholesale grocery and fruit warehouses carry very large stocks. Wholesale auto supply warehouses are also located here. Lumbering, although not on the same scale as west of the Rockies, brings in a good payroll. About 2,000 cars of forest products are shipped annually.

In 1954, 320 trade licences were granted and the total grows each year. Building permits issued during 1955 up to September 30 were for 330 res-

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idences valued at $1,998,950.00 and others $1,405,721.00 or a total of $3,404,671.00. In addition a permit for a Junior High School of $400,000 will be issued as soon as foundation tests have been completed, and a Federal building site is being readied, on which a structure costing more than $400,000 will be erected. The Department of National Defence has undertaken considerable building on which no information is at present available. These three projects will certainly run into another million dollars. Application for permit for apartment buildings costing $120,000 has been received. The village sold 38 lots near the air strip this summer on which residences have to be built in the near future. Permits would have been issued for these but shortage of supplies, particularly cement, have held up plans.

A modern honey plant, reputed to be one of the best in Canada, has been operating in Dawson Creek for three years. This year this company alone had over 1,500 colonies of bees through out the district and harvested about 250,000 lbs of honey. The value of these bees for pollination purposes exceeds the value of the honey.

The $2,000,000 XL oil refinery which recently went into operation is a new industry. The capacity of the plant is 2,000 barrels daily and will employ a staff of 50 who will receive a payroll of a quarter of a million dollars annually.

The trucking industry plays an important role in the economic life of the village. It is estimated that over $30000,000 is invested in this business. Scheduled services operate to the Yukon, Prince George and Vancouver with connections to all parts of North America. Bus services also operate to these points. Although

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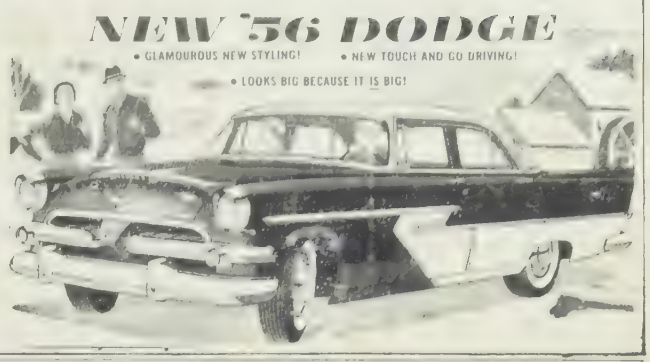

there is a good landing strip no regular air service operates from Dawson Creek at present. A new air field site is being studied and it is hoped that regular services will operate again in the near future. Limousine service provides transportation of passengers and mail to the Fort St. John airport about forty miles north. The Northern Alberta Railway operates a daily (except Sunday) pass train between Dawson Creek and Edmonton. Telephone and telegraph service is supplied by the Dominion Department of Transport and also telegraph service by the N. A. R.

There are 1200 telephones in use and a waiting list of 265. The present switchboards are very congested at the present time and are likely to stay that way until the new federal building is completed. Equipment is arriving preparatory to a switch over to an automatic system. All rural areas in the Peace River district have at least a call office.

Two weekly newspapers serve the district. The Peace River Block News, established in 1939, and the Dawson Creek Star, started in 1948. Radio Station C. J. D. C. (1350 on your dial) operates a 1,000 watt station and keeps thousands of scattered homes up to date on local and international news.

Retail stores of all kinds are here including two large departmental stores, the Dawson Co-operative and the Hudson's Bay. The former had a sales record in 1954 of nearly $800,000. Although "The Bay" have spacious premises they are compelled to enlarge and are erecting new premises next spring.

The future? All our prophesies in the past have fallen short. The growth of the village and surroundings have been phenomenal but there seems to be no reason why its growth should not continue. Town planners are basing their plans on a population of 18,000 by 1971 with a school attendance of 3,600. To those who remember the old hamlet it does not seem possible that this could happen. Others who have lived through the expansion of the last fifteen years wonder if the planners know the town and if inhabitants and have set their sights rather low. It has been a wonderful experience taking part in the development of the "wilderness", a development equal to anything in the history of Canada. Nor has this development finished. to many it seems just the beginning. The trials and tribulations of the old western pioneers has now been softened but there is yet the need of men and women with the pioneer instinct. Men and women who are willing to back their brain and brawn against nature. Old Mother Nature is like a young bronc - hard to master but once mastered is a kind and generous servant.

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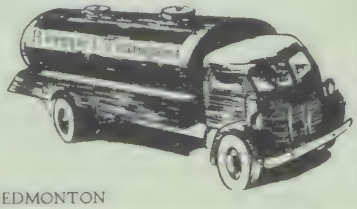

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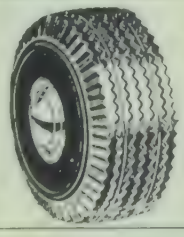

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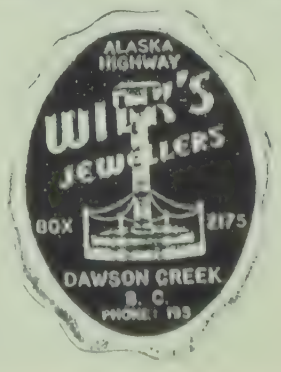

EARLY DAYS IN THE PEACE RIVER

CONTINED FROM PAGE 12

Mrs. Gauthier the first white woman settler in this district and her daughter Mrs. Pat Therien, the first white child born on the Pouce Coupe Prairie as this district was then called. Mrs. Gauthier's first husband, the late Hector Tremblay, settled with his family on the Pouce Coupe River two miles north of the present village of Pouce Coupe about 1908. He ran a stopping house and trading post for some time. Mr. Bob Tremblay of Pouce Coupe is a son.

I have been asked to tell you something of the pioneering of this district and the Peace River country as a whole previous to the arrival of steel.

We began to hear of the Peace River country about 1908 when the first settlers began to arrive in the Grande Prairie district. These earliest settlers came overland by pack train or on foot from Edson or by way of Athabasca and Lesser Slave Lake. Then about 1910 a passable winter trail was cut through from Edson to Grande Prairie. Stopping places were set up along the trail and the early settlers who had grown grain and feed would drive to Edson loaded with oats and hay and make caches at these stopping places on the way out so that they could haul a full load on the return trip which usually consisted of a year's grubstake and some new machinery.

The trip usually took about a month and some would make an extra trip hauling freight for trading posts. In this way they would make enough to keep them for another year. The load for one team was about 4,000 pounds and as the rate to Grande Prairie was 10¢ a pound they would make $400 less stopping expenses.

The first settlers to arrive in this district came in 1912 the first year land here was open for homesteading and Harry Gibson (who is still here) came with his brother Walter at that time.

We were living in Vancouver and heard about the wonderful land to be had in the Peace River country for ten dollars a quarter section. It became the subject of many discussions led by my father who had homesteaded in Manitoba in the eighties and still had the pioneering spirit and was encouraged by five boys who were no doubt looking for adventure more than land. So in the fall of 1913 we left Vancouver for Edmonton and the Peace River country.

Information regarding this great country was limited and was mostly hearsay but my father sold our house and took in payment two teams of horses and harness. We shipped a car load of household effects and the horses to Edmonton and as I was the oldest at home (Lester, my older brother was married and living in Calgary) I was given the job of travelling in the car with the horses and furniture. About this time the country was entering into a period of unemployment and I had company most of the way. At times as many as three were in the car with me getting a free ride. When the freight stopped they would hide behind the furniture so that the railroad crew would not spot them and kick them off. The trip took about a week. I enjoyed it as all I had to do was feed and water the horses.

On arriving at Edmonton we found that the best time to leave for the north was after New Year when the sleighing would be better. So we stayed in Edmonton until February, keeping the horses in working shape and making some extra money by hauling coal. During our stay in Edmonton we suffered a severe loss by the death of our mother from pneumonia. Knowing that it was her wish that we should go to the Peace River we decided to go on. It put a real burden on my dad as my three younger brothers were from eight to thirteen years. My brother's wife took on the job of cooking, mending and mothering the younger fry which was quite a load as she was just a young bride at the time. She is now living at Pouce Coupe (Mrs. Lester Harper).

Edmonton at that time was still booming and real estate offices on Jasper Avenue had big banners across their fronts advertising lots for sale at Grouard, Peace River and Grande Prairie and the market place was the sounding board for the great north land. Horses, cattle and machinery were auctioned off to new settlers going north and there was the odd homesteader from the north looking for an extra team or sleigh. In talking to them we got first hand information and decided on the Edson route to Grande Prairie. We had not at that time heard of the Pouce Coupe Prairie

In February we loaded a years supply of grub and only necessary household effects such as blankets and mattresses, 2 walking plows with breaker and stubble bottoms, 4 sections harrows, a mower and rake, 3 sleighs and my dad's buggy as he had a prize driver which he was determined to take with us. We had bought three more horses which gave us three teams, one driver and an extra work horse. The other items were only absolute essentials such as a cooking stove, kitchen utensils, logging chains, medical supplies, etc. and of course a couple of extra sleigh runners, stark pins, a forge and some iron as well as saws and axes.

Leaving for Edson it was decided that my younger brother Wilbur and I would go with the car and the rest took

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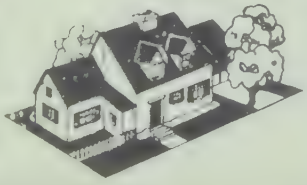
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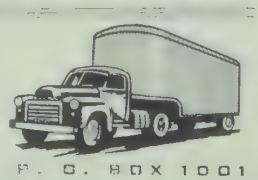
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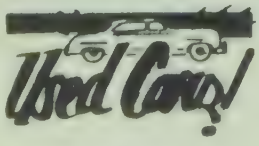

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the passenger train. About halfway to Edson the brakeman advised us that only one could ride free with the car so I went forward to the engine and worked my way by shovelling coal to the fireman. I remember it was cold and that I took on a good coating of coal dust.

On arrival at Edson we found a bustling town with many outfits getting ready for the trip north. We unloaded our car of effects on to three sleighs. On one we set up our stove and along the sides we put trunks and boxes to make places to sleep and to use as chairs during meal time. Over this sleigh we put a tent making a warm place to sleep and eat.

The first week on the road we made little headway as there was not much snow and the road was rough. We only made 57 miles during the first week but it turned colder and some snow fell making the going better. There were many hills and no grading had been done except on the bad side hills. It necessitated doubling up to get the loads over these places. One place I well remember.

Crossing a creek with hills on both sides my dad got stuck on the bridge so I pulled up behind and took my team off to help him. As we were not able to move the load my brother Lester took his team off the caboose, which was at the top of the hill, and came down to help. While we were getting hitched on someone glanced back up the hill and shouted "Here comes the caboose". As there was no room for the buggy on the sleighs my younger brother was driving it. He had pulled up behind my load and seeing the approaching disaster moved the driver alongside my sleigh but there was not time nor room to get the buggy out of the way. Although the caboose was not travelling fast it ran into the buggy and folded it up like an accordian.

This accident almost broke up the family compact as my father had visions of many a fine drive over the rolling prairies of the Peace. We loaded what was left of the buggy on to one of the sleighs. If you have ever tried to repair a buggy you will know it is never the same again.

About a week later we arrived in Grande Prairie and stayed there for a day looking the country over but decided to go farther west to Saskatoon Lake north of the present town of Wembley. At that time these names were only trading posts with livery barns, eating places and bunk houses. While looking around Saskatoon Lake we met Harry Gibson, who told us of the Pouce Coupe prairie so we decided to drive on there and give it the once over.

I think our decision was influenced greatly by the plans of the Edmonton, Dunvegan & British Columbia Railway

(now known as the N. A. R.) and the Pacific Great Eastern which were to connect up eventually just east of the present Dawson Creek at the Alberta -B. C. boundary. Harry Gibson had been there for two years and built a house and barn. He had plenty of feed and shelter so he invited us to stay at his place. Our first day out from Saskatoon Lake took us to the Johnson place, located just north of the present Beaverlodge. Mr. Johnson ran a stoppingplace where we obtained shelter for the horses and bought feed as we had used all we brought with us. I remember the Johnson kids running round the yard.

They are now well known residents of Beaverlodge and two of the boys usually take in our bonspiel each year. The next day we reached Horse Lake where the famous Brainard eating place is located now. We camped that night amongst the spruce trees on the north end of the lake. One thing I remember was the necessity of putting the harness up in the trees at night because of the large number of rabbits. These animals do enjoy a meal of leather and will ruin a set of harness in a night.

The road was heavy because there were very few people living north of Beaverlodge and the going was slow. On the fourth day out of Saskatoon Lake we had hoped to make Harry Gibson's but as the horses were played out and we were in open country we could not make it. We camped for the night just east of the present Ed. Hauger farm and arrived at Gibsons the next morning.

Fortunately for us a homesteader up Saskatoon Creek, three miles from Gibsons had gone bush-wacky and shot himself and the Mounted Police from Fort St. John were holding a sale of his effects that afternoon. He had been a hard worker and built himself a four stall barn and a log shack 12 x 16 feet and put up a lot of hay. My dad bought the hay and rented the place for a year so the next day we moved in. We built bunks along one side of the shack with upper and lower berths out of small poles.

My brother Lester and I were the only ones entitled to file on land as father had used his rights in Manitoba. We looked round for a few days and decided to take up land just east of where we were living. Lester took a saddle horse and rode to Grande Prairie to file on his land and file proxy for me as I was not quite eighteen. At that time there were only three settlers west of us, Shepherd Addy and Cameron. East of us were Piper, Atkinson and one or two others. The settlers were coming in fast and nearly every day someone would arrive on foot or saddle horse looking over the country.

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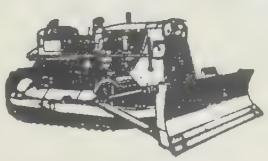

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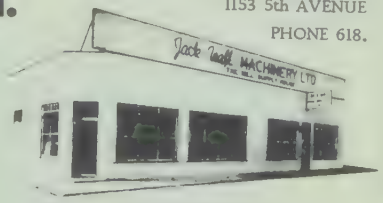

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The only market for farm produce at that time was the demands by new settlers for seed or feed. Grande Prairie, being an older settlement was building up surplusses. The winter of 1914-15 saw steel arrive at McLellan, or Round Lake as it was called then. That fall the settlers organized a crew and cut a road through to Spirit River and the first of supplies were freighted in from Round Lake. My dad went out to Edmonton soon after and purchased supplies for another year, which included a ton of flour and half ton of sugar. He also purchased a drill, binder and disc harrow and with the furniture stored in Edmonton a year earlier made up a carload.

We had arranged to meet him at Round Lake about March 1st. My brother and I took three teams and sleighs to freight in the supplies. The train was four days late which was not unusual but the bad part was that it started to chinook and we were losing snow. By the time we got loaded the snow between us and the Smokey River was practically gone. One item we debated was leaving our piano but we decided to load it and started out.

We had to double up for stretches of several miles at a time and it also necessitated driving at night to take advantage of the frost which made travelling easier. The return trip took us ten days and we drove long hours with the result our horses were rather thin for starting spring work.

The first year was a year of hard work. We got out fence posts, rails, wood and logs built ourselves four miles of fence, two houses, two barns, besides breaking ninety acres with two walking plows. The following summer was another summer of breaking new land, building root-houses, chicken pens, etc. and I was getting fed up so decided to join the army.

Lester and I left for Edmonton in the late summer after we had the buildings pretty well up and left dad and the rest to look after things until our return four years later. We tra-

velled to the end of steel by way of Grande Prairie by wagon and barge and from there by work train to Round Lake and by passenger train from there. Construction was proceeding on the Edmonton Dunvegan line and soon reached Spirit River. The grade was constructed from Spirit River to the B. C. boundary just east of Dawson Creek but hopes for steel on that grade faded when Grande Prairie sent a delegation to Edmonton to press for the extension to Grande Prairie.

They were an older settlement and their arguments carried weight. Their production of grain had increased to the point where they had several million bushels and no market except Spirit River. Being in Alberta they were able to influence their government who naturally were sympathetic and the steel went to Grande Prairie. This was a God send for that district as many farmers were rich in grain but did not have a dollar and were finding it extremely difficult to get money to buy the necessities of life. Because of the war and the scarcity of steel, that ended construction for several years.

During this time the grade to Spirit River proved very valuable as a highway and thousands of bushels of grain and other products were hauled during the winter season. To give you some idea of the volume of traffic at its peak 600 freight teams a week arrived in Spirit River with loads averaging 100 bushels of wheat per team. Although the long haul averaged five to six days per trip and took a large slice of the cheque for expenses the country was still fairly prosperous. It made a booming town of Spirit River and a large volume of grain and other products were funnelled through there.

The next step in railroad construction was the extension to Wembley. In the meantime the road to Wembley was improving so trucks began to take the place of teams. Grain was moving to Spirit River in the winter and Wembley in the summer.

The railway was then extended to Hythe which enjoyed a period of prosperity while it remained the end of steel and practically all the grain was trucked to this point.

Finally came the great day for our district when the steel arrived at Dawson Creek. At 6:30 p. m. on January 15, 1931 the first regular passenger train pulled in and the long haul for many was over. Although some districts are still a long way from railhead the trucks and better roads have made it comparatively easy to market grain, hogs and cattle. The bugbear of the farmer today is still the long haul and we all look forward to the day when this vast north country will get further relief by the completion of the P. G. E. into our great Peace River country with its huge undeveloped resources.

I must apologise for making this talk personal but I am sure the experiences related apply to every family who came in over the Edson Trail or by way of Athabasca. I have used our experiences to try to give you a better picture of the trips the earlier settlers made while moving into the Peace River country.

THE END

PETER DUNLEVEY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Baptiste in action at the Indian games and he wanted no muss with either one.

Was the big Indian stepping in now to prevent a row among the whites? thought Dunlevey. Before McLean could reply he said quietly: "No, Baptiste. Going to be no cleaning up around here to-night, and to-morrow we start to look for that gold."

Here Baptiste interposed again: "Now you talk 'bout gol. Me, I lak' show you someting messeur Pete." Throwing some more wood on the fire to make a light, he drew a small buckskin sack from another buckskin pouch hanging from his belt and took from it a small object that shone brightly golden in the firelight. This he handed to Dunlevey saying: "Dat one you call gol'?"

The object proved to be a plain circlet or ring that had been beaten out of a nugget of pure gold and exquisitely carved in an Indian lattice-work design.

"Gold?" said Dunlevey, now excited. "Of course its gold, pure solid gold." "Heavy too, weighting it in his hand. "Isn't it Jim?"

While the rest of the party were excitedly examining the trinket, Dunlevey extracted from the Indian that he had not found the gold himself. That the ring had been in possession of his family for unnumbered years and had been found on a creek that emptied into another little river away far in the mountains, but not far from where his uncle had been killed by the grizzly. That this other little river came from the North and eventually emptied into the river, they were bound for below the big lake.

This new little river eventually proved to be what became known as the North Fork of Quesnel River and the creek where the nugget was found might have been any one of the many creeks emptying into it in Keithley section, but most likely Goose Creek from the evidently pure quality of the light yellow gold, as Goose Creek gold is still rated the finest in the Cariboo.

The Indian added: "I tink, me, is beter I show you, so we know for sure is gol' we go look for to-morrow."

This little incident certainly has great historical significance and value, as we shall see, in relation to the discovery of coarse gold in the Cariboo Mountains of the Quesnel River.

Anyway after that golden audience Dunlevey found no further trouble about getting his party off in the morning. And he wondered: Did that big astute Indian foresee and deliberately plan that timely help to his plans?

In the morning it transpired that Tomaah had decided not to go with the miners, saying he expected a message any day directing him to go out on another dispatch trip, but Dunlevey suspected that the beauteous young Taghleil girl was his chief attraction and he said he couldn't blame him in the least.

So it was Baptiste who took over alone the task of guiding the miners' party. An efficient guide he proved, too. A bit taciturn for the most part, but always good humoredly so. He must have known the country well, or so the whitemen thought, for he never seemed to hesitate about his direction, and there was no sign of a trail to follow, except game trails and they almost always crossed their line of travel, which was almost directly North. He seemed to use uncanny judgment about choosing camp sites nearly always at a meadow where the water and horse feed were good and the animals could feed in the open and be easily kept track of. Though how he knew where to find those meadows, in that pine forest, whose chief characteristic was its eternal sameness, was a mystery to the whitemen.

Baptiste had three cayuses with saddles of his own which he turned in to the services of the miners and that lightened the loads of some of the other horses. But even so, having to cut their way through many thickets and some stretches of wind-falls they never made more than ten or twelve miles a day. But at that the miners thought it better going than they expected to make through unknown woods. He proved an expert hunter, too, and kept the party supplied with fresh venison that fell to his mighty war bow, and fresh fish caught in the lakes with his net, which he had to swim out to set. He also chose the smaller doe deer as they could be all used before the meat spoiled in the hot, fly infested weather. Neither would he kill a bear, explaining that neither the meat nor the hide were any good at that time of the year.

When Dunlevey asked him why he didn't kill a buck he explained: "Buck he seek inside dis moon. Not seek, jus' look seek. Whiteman see, not lak, no eat."

Nearly always when hunting, and at other times as well, he wore only his moccasins and a breach clout, and the miners wondered why the myriads of big hungry mosquitoes didn't seem to bother him, 'till they saw him anointing his skin with some sort of preparation, which he explained was made of a sort of fungus growth, found on old cedar trees, mixed with other oils and animal secretions - even a small quantity of skunk secretion. The odor of the combined concoction was very powerful but not at all unpleasant to humans. Baptiste claimed it killed the man smell, so he could hunt and track down wind as the game travelled when feeding, and often he met game coming back questing the strange scent.

He showed the miners how to dig the roots, that grew in the pine woods, with the picks that some of them carried to prospect with. He showed them shrubs and bulbs to cook for greens - chiefly Indian rhubarb, and solomon seal - also watercress that grew to profusion in the cold springs they passed. He didn't greatly relish the bacon, beans and yeast powder bannock of the miners' and by providing the fresh meat, roots and green stuff which they all relished he saved considerably on the miners' food supply.

The first morning out he came in with a small doe deer across his broad shoulders, just as the miners were rolling out of their blankets. It was a revelation to them to see him skin and dress that deer. Using his knife very little after the main ripping cuts were made, he literally peeled the hide off with his strong hands; then with a few light strokes of his hunting axe he severed the ribs from the spine, ran a slim peeled willow stick up through them and stuck the other end of the stick in the ground before the fire.

Grinning, he grunted to the miners: "Waugh! Squalam mowitch hiyoo skookum mukamuk you see! Waugh!" (Roast venison very good eats.) While the miners were cooking their breakfast he carefully tended his two sticks of venison. Occasionally turning them up-side down so the melted fat would run back down over the roasting meat again. When they were done to his liking - really only half done - and cooled off a bit, he pointed to one of the roasts saying: "You try, mebbe you lak'. You use salt. Me no salt." Seeing the Indian's work was efficient and clean, Dunlevey tried it and declared it was the finest tasting meat he had ever eaten. Baptiste was pleased and explained that if the meat had been allowed to cool before cooking it would probably be more to the white-man's taste.

In his eating habits Baptiste was basic. First he would split a rib off with his knife; then taking one end of the meat in his teeth he would rip the rib out of it with one savage wrench and throw it aside. He cut a mouthful off - and such a mouthful - held in his teeth, by passing his knife through it just in front of his lips. A few crunching movements of his powerful jaws and down it would go. Then another cut. In an incredably short time all that was left of his side of the ribs was a neat pile of the bones. When some one wanted to throw these into the fire he protested: "Non, non! No burn good bone. Injun plenty dog eat bone. No dog here, sometam wil' tillicum. Fin' bone, eat. Good! Coyote all tam come behin' where man go. Hongry fin' bone, eat. Tell Injun Stanalia' (Dene for thank you.) Throwing his head back he let out a yelping howl in perfect imitation of a coyote. Immediately out on the meadow a real coyote answered, then another.

"You see!" grinned the savage child of Nature. True, he ate a whole rib of deer himself - but it was a small deer at that and there really isn't much meat on one - but he wouldn't take anything else. In fact he seldom tasted the beans and bannock - and that

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did him all day - except for an occasional feed of pine sap when he came to a likely tree. At supper he ate less meat and more roots and green stuff. He seldom drank tea either and when he did, he had to have plenty of sugar in it. In fact it seemed he drank the tea for the sugar in it.

It was the guide who insisted that they make each day's journey in one stage. "Better for Kewtin (horse)" explained Baptiste. "Not so much sore back. Better for man, too. Not so much work an' lose tam mak eet pack two tam wan day." Then, too, the horses could feed and men rest before the big yellow mosquitoes got to work on them in the evening. But they were up and away as possible in the mornings. In a matter of three or four days they struck Moffitt Creek (afterwards so called) just North of what is now called McIntosh Lakes. It was the largest creek they had come to, and was booming in high water. Of course the miners wanted to stop and prospect it, but they gave it only one day, there. That being sufficient to prove to Crow and Sellers the creek wasn't a gold bearing stream. Not the right formation or the right kind of gravel.

But Moffitt was not convinced. Subsequently he spent many weary weeks prospecting it to its source without success. He found no gold worth mentioning except down near its mouth where it emptied into the Horsefly River and that proved to be only a spill from the Horsefly itself and not from Moffitt Creek. So it seems that the creek derived its name, among the early miners from this persistency of Moffitt's in following a forelorn hope.

Another two or three days found the party at the end of their trip. They had found their little river. But it didn't seem so little, being in full spring freshette. Baptiste led them to a flat at a bend on the West shore where there was a little meadow and feed for the horses. The Indian was dismayed when he saw high water overflowing the banks. He had expected to be able to show the miners some gold on the gravelly beach where he understood some Indians had found it. But now there was no beach, but Sellers and Crow laughed at that as the former said to him: "Baptiste, you sure are the best hunter and guide in the world. And a damn good friend to boot. There's none to beat you there; but you're no miner. How could you be?"

"Right you are," agreed Crow, "All he agreed to do was to show us this river and he's done that in fine

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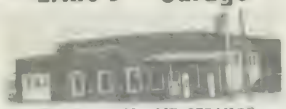

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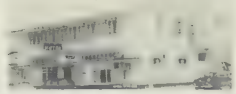

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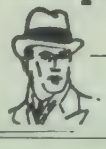

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style. It's up to us to find the gold now and I'm telling you this layout looks good to me. This low flat once the bed of the river and this bench here where it's moved.

By this time Dunlevey and some of the others had joined the three. It was evident Dunlevey was having all he could do to suppress his excitement. His voice ringing with enthusiasm he said: "Well, boys, we're here! We're here! This is the river all right. Now its up to us to find this gold." Turning to the Indian he held out his hand, which Baptiste grasped eagerly; for he was disturbed that he couldn't show these men some of the gold they were so crazy about, as he thought.

"Baptiste, you are one tip - top guide," complimented the glowing miner. "Best I ever saw or heard of. You've done your job fine." Then noting the big Indian's troubled manner he continued: "We'll find the gold old man, don't worry. That's our business and I agree with Crow this layout looks good to me, too." Then noting the Indian's wistful glance at the others as if for confirmation, he called out: "Everybody up and shake hands with our guide for his grand job of fetching us here!" Of course they all responded, not only heartily but boisterously, catching their leader's enthusiasm, and executed what they fondly imagined to be a sort of war dance around the stately Indian.

War dance or not, their enthusiasm got him too. He couldn't hold the stately dignified pose in that prancing yelling bunch of crazy white men. And besides, the Indian loves a bit of ceremony to celebrate any special event, be it happy or tragic. So he succumbed to the moment's magic witchery and was soon war hopping the highest and yelling the loudest in that whirling circle of celebrants. All except Ira Crow, the inveterate miner, who had seized the first chance to dodge back to his prospect hole. Presently the others heard him on the bank of the river: "Hi boys, here she is! She's here all right! Come an' look at her!"

The war dance ceased abruptly. Looking in his direction they saw shakes, swings and sways to his gold pan. Racing over they met and surrounded him, most of them shaking in their excitement.

"There she is boys. Luk at her! Shot gold that, I'll say! No flat, flaky Fraser River gold bout that, cause it ain't travelled so far. 'Course it ain't right coarse yit bein' right on top; but wait till we git down to whatever it is goes for bedrock under here an' we'll find her coarse enough. We'll find Tomaah's beans all right.

Staring, they all saw the first Cariboo gold prospect!

Then there were grunts and blasts of breath, gasping sighs from heaving chest, showing that every man of them

had been holding his breath in overpowering suspense during this momentous epoch - making moment! There in that pan lay the evidence of the golden goal they had been seeking!

Among the many glittering yellow specks showing through the washing black sand, and spoonful or two of water at the lower angle of the pan, there rolled some larger yellow, roughly round pieces up to the size of turnip or clover seeds.

That they didn't slip or slide but rolled was the all-important fact. The fact that that told these miners they were in coarse gold country. Shot gold, as it is called is always considered a coarse gold prospect, indicating still coarser gold lower down in the vicinity.

Thus had Ira Crow, of the Dunlevey party, panned the first coarse gold prospect among the mountains of the Cariboo or the Horsefly River.

But Baptiste wasn't impressed. He was disappointed. He had never found any gold himself, probably because he had never looked for any. He had hunted on the Horsefly River--or, "The Wild Water," as the Shuswaps called it--with the uncle who had been killed, but he had never been to this spot where sizeable nuggets of gold had been found by his people on the beach of the river at low water. With the consumate woodcraft which few but the old time Indians possessed he had led them straight to the spot. But the river was high, now. There was no beach. He couldn't fulfill the charge laid upon him by his friend and he didn't like it.

Not being a miner he couldn't understand the joyful attitude of these gold-crazy whitemen, who were so sure they would find the nuggets because they had found the tiny rocklets that rolled. So he didn't celebrate. When Sellers offered him the rum bottle he refused bluntly. Baptiste was never a drinking Indian anyway. That settled it. These whitemen were crazy and that was all there was to it. And it made him sorry for them.

"No," he said. "Me, I go hunt."

And seizing his bow and quiver, his light axe and heavy hunting knife and pack, away he strode at his tireless swinging gait to his beloved native woods and kindred of the wild, where he knew he would not feel so alien and alone as he did now with these crazy whitemen.

The miners made haste to utilize the high water for their sluicing, and to make the lumber for their boxes their precious whip saw came into strong demand. But when later they got down to bed-rock they found it not rock but a solid, sticky blue clay, and Crow recognized it at once as the same sort of stuff as he had encountered in California. They found some of Tomaah's Lillooet beans imbedded in it all right, so they had to dig up the surface of it. But when they dumped this into their sluice boxes it failed to dissolve, but rolled on down over the riffles and out on the dump intact, picking up other precious gold pieces on the way. So the word soon got around: "Look out for that California blue clay or it will rob your sluice boxes!"

It is not recorded how much gold the Dunlevey party got out of that flat. But it is estimated that, all told, over a million dollars was taken out of it. As a sort of postscript to this, that same flat just east of the present village of Horsefly is owned by Dougherty and Hooker, now as a sheep ranch, and in "digging around" just a year or two ago they lit onto a small patch of pay dirt, that was somehow overlooked by the early miners, out of which they dug several hundred dollars of that same old Horsefly gold.

Twelve hours after the Dunlevey party arrived on the Horsefly another group followed. Among them was Neil Campbell, father of Al. B. and Robert N., and their sisters of Horsefly.

The Neil Campbell bunch didn't stay long on the Horsefly. It is certain they heard the story of Baptiste's ring that was made of gold found on some creek on the headwaters of the North Fork of the Quesnel River and that must have been the lure which made them too restless to stay and battle that blue clay on the Horsefly. So, that same summer of 1859 they drifted down to the Forks; then up the North Fork and located and left a partner on each of the three Creeks: Goose,

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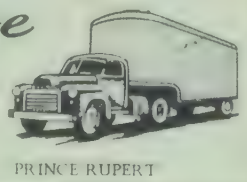

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Antler and Grouse, and the following year (1860) pooled their interests and divided $125,000 between the five partners. Some built boats on Quesnel Lake and attempted to run the river in them but the boats were shattered and a good many were drowned.

But that didn't daunt John McLean and a few other reckless daredevils. They built a raft of dry cedar that must have been, as it was said to be, a model of powerful construction, for they succeeded with many hair-raising experiences, in running the river with it all the way to the Fraser. Then they went up the Fraser to Manson Creek. But finding nothing worth their while there they returned to William's Creek.

By 1860 the miners were leaving the Brigade Trail at Mud Lake and going in to William's Creek by way of Beaver Lake, Quesnel Forks and Keithley. Dunlevey saw a chance of opening a stopping place and supply station--with gambling as a side issue, at Beaver Lake with Jim Sellers only as a partner. But Moffitt and Manifree were there too, off and on, as assistants. Dunlevey declared he made more money there than he ever did at mining. But he saw that the new Cariboo Wagon Road would kill that, and when the road reached Soda Creek in the fall of '63, he left Sellers at Beaver Lake and started a hotel, saloon, store and ranch at Soda Creek.

Jim Sellers must have been sincere in his regard for Agat, the elder Taghliel girl; for he later married her--frontier fashion--and she proved a good and faithful wife.

Likewise Moffitt took a Shuswap girl from Soda Creek and Dunlevey a Dene beauty from Fort Alexandria. Sons of the three were my schoolmates at St. Joseph's Mission; while my sisters were schoolmates of the Dunlevey and Moffitt girls at the St. Ann's Convent across the yard.

Dunlevey died at Soda Creek and was buried in the St. Joseph's Mission cemetary in consecrated ground. So he must have renounced his Free Masonry before he died and returned to the faith of his fathers.

His grave lies neglected and forgotten save for the thorny guard that is a tangle of wild rose bushes which, in their season, are a mass of lovely pink buds and blooms, shedding their short lived glory and their passing petals o'er the grave below. Parting these bushes one may read on the headstone:

IN LOVING MEMORY of Peter Curran Dunlevey. Born at Pittsburg, PA., U. S. A., October 21, 1834. Died October 15th, 1904.

Requiescat in Pace -- AMEN

THE END

LETTERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

driver decided to sashay across ahead of us, heading for a shop window where my ten year old daughter insisted on buying a sport hat. Say what you like for parking meters but this one stopped the car. In the excitement I forgot about visiting the Digest, but my daughter got her hat.

We enjoyed visiting Quesnel and hope to visit again next summer.

Yours truly,
Mrs. R. Keith.

Munroe Falls,
Ohio.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

Enclosed find money order for $3.00 to renew my subscription. I don't want to miss any of the good reading etc. about this wonderful country. I am sure looking forward to visiting it in the near future.

Sincerely yours,
E. J. Spriggel.

General Hospital,
Brantford, Ont.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

I look forward very much to each issue of the Digest. Could we hear a little more from the Burns Lake district. I spent a number of years in the hospital there and really get "homesick" for Burns Lake district news. Wishing you every success in 1956, and thanking you for the pleasure the Digest has afforded me in 1955.

Sincerely yours,
Doris Allin.

** In the planing stage is a special Highway 16 edition covering from Prince George to Prince Rupert. We think you will find it interesting.

Anahim Lake,
B. C.

Editor,
Northwest Digest.

Enclosed is $2.50 for a renewal of my subscription to the Northwest Digest.

I meant to go in and pay this when we were in for the beef drive but it slipped my mind.

We certainly enjoy the Digest and always look forward to each issue. We're learning more about our country from your magazine than we would any other way. Keep up the good work.

Yours truly,
Mrs. F. Phillips.

** Thank you Mrs. Phillips. And we enjoyed reading about your husband's adventures in Rich Hobson's books "Grass Beyond the Mountain" and "Nothing Too Good for a Cowboy".

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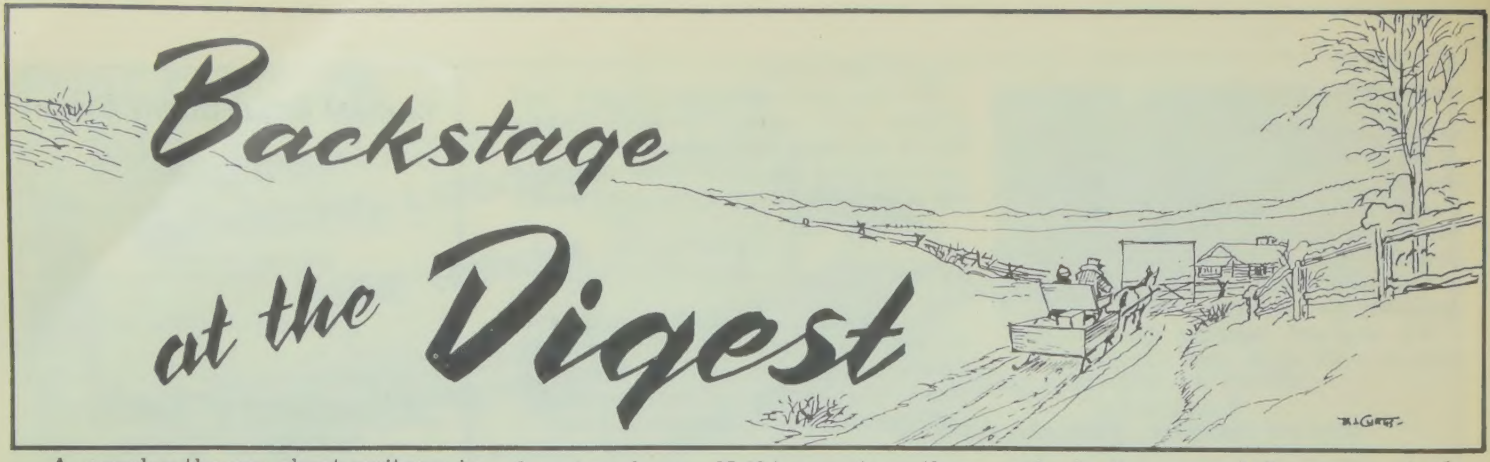


A popular theory about writers is that they have been fired from at least five jobs, quit a half dozen more, and have gone into business at least three times. While the Author of the Dawson Creek article in this issue hasn't exactly followed this pattern, he hasn't deviated too greatly either. He came to Canada in 1907, and not liking the east went west to Moose Jaw. He didn't like Moose Jaw either, because next he homesteaded at Mortlach until 1917 then joined the Canadian Army Medical Corps.

After being discharged in 1920 he went further west to Edmonton and was a salesman for 10 years. Then for a change of scenery he worked for the Public Works Department for 2 years and in 1932 became editor of the Peace River Block News at Dawson Creek. A few years later he was Chief Equipment clerk for a section of the Alaska Highway and currently owns B.C.'s farthest north commercial nursery. This latter venture should anchor him, because it is slightly inconvenient to remove the multitudinous plants, shrubs, bulbs, and other addenda that he sells to help beautify Peace River homes.

Writing the feature on Dawson Creek was uneventful, he says. Couple of things tried to slow him down, attack of the flu and his greenhouse burning down. Nothing serious though. Modest folk, these writers.

AUTHOR HARRY GILES AND FRIEND, et FISH.

"What are you holding in the picture," we asked?

"Oh, that, it's a fish."

Hmm. We suspected it was. Serves us right for being curious. However we finally learned that it was an 18 1/2 pound lake trout from Muncho Lake, south of Liard River in the Peace River district.

While speaking of writers, we frequently receive letters asking if would-be contributors may send in an article. The answer is a great, big resounding "YES". Many articles arrive unheralded and unsung, but always welcome. We read them all, and try to report in two weeks. Regarding subject matter, we are interested in anything that will make good reading to the average B.C. resident.

But don't forget to always enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope. For further details about submitting manuscripts, Nelson Bond, a free lancer for 20 years, had this to say in a recent issue of "The Writer".

There are still those who submit hand-written stories. The quill was good enough for Scott and Thackeray, but these gentlemen are buried now, as is their once fine implement.

Scripts should be typed with a fresh, black ribbon on one side of a good quality 8 1/2 x 11 white bond paper. Any deviation from this is bad, This doubtless sounds very clipped; particularly as advice to writers, who believe in originality. In writing, let the originality show in the words; not in the format which is standard.

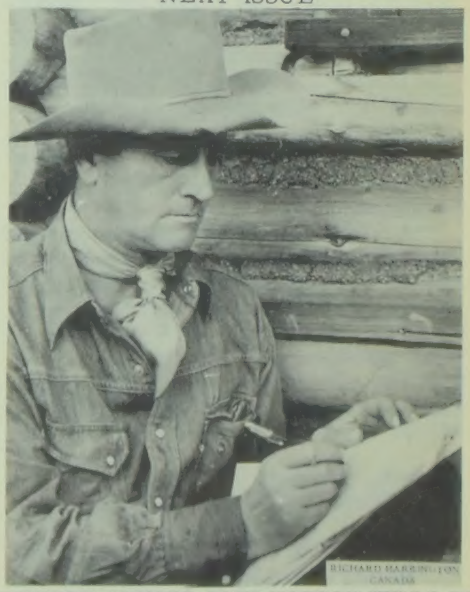
Editors have little good humor to spend on the small ruses by which some writers attempt to learn whether or not an editor has actually read their submissions. Every day or so, a script comes in in which one page is deliberately inverted--the author's intent being to discover whether in reading that page the editor turned it rightside up again. Or perhaps two pages lightly pasted together; another way of learning the same thing.

Onthe first page of your typescript the following features should be offered. In the upper left corner, single spaced, about one inch from the top, goes the author's name and address. In the upper right corner, the approximate word length. Estimate wordage in round figures. For articles not exceeding 2,000 words; estimate to the nearest 100 words.

I avoid elite . . . that's the little type. Most editors wear reading glasses; all suffer from eyestrain. So anything you can do to keep them happy will serve to make you wealthier.

Your text should have margins of approximately one inch to left and right. Less space makes for a tight and unattractive page, more indicates padding. Writers using a pica typewriter should set the left marginal stop at 12, the right at 72. Paragraphs should be indented ten spaces, which means your tabulator stop should be set at 22. Page endings should be even, showing about one inch of white space at the bottom. A pair of centered asterisks suffices to show your story is finished. And as every polar bear knows--when your tale is told, it's time to go!

NEXT ISSUE



COWBOY AUTHOR RICH HOBSON TELLS OF HIS STRUGGLE TO WRITE HIS LATEST BOOK "NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR A COWBOY"

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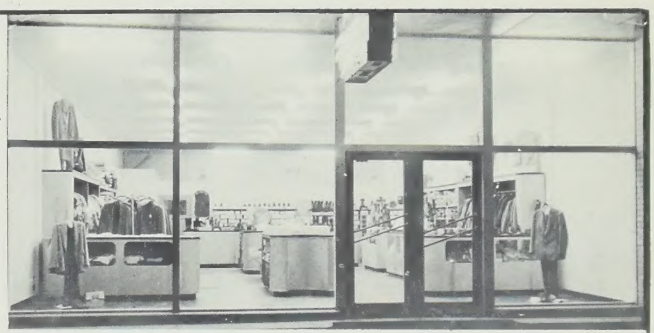

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